

Do The Pop!

The magazine of underrated rock 'n' roll

1



RADIO BIRDMAN



MC5

**DO NOT ADJUST
YOUR SET . . .**

Eater! Sham 69!

Stooges! Dead Boys!

Satan's Rats!

Irly Seattle Punk!

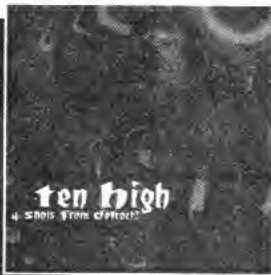
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IGGY POP
"Rough Power"



MC5
"The American Ruse"



THE UP
"Killer Up!"



JOHN SINCLAIR & Wayne Kramer
"Friday, The 13th"



MC5
"Ice Pick Slim"



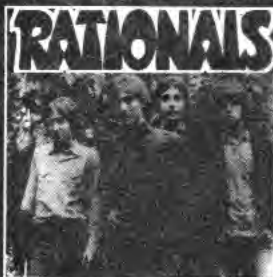
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THE FLAMIN' GROOVIES



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Do The Pop

The Magazine of Underrated Rocknroll

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source of bad karma**

**This issue is dedicated to the memories of
Sterling Morrison and Fred 'Jonie' Smith,
without whom there would be no POP.
"The POP is the WAY, the TRUTH and the
LIGHT"**

NOVEMBER 1995

Issue 1

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Seattle Chapter of the Detroit Glee Club

Photo by Greg Ong

Danger Boy by Alan

IMMEDIATELY dating myself, I was 13 in 1977, when punk hit North America. My favorite bands at that time were THE SWEET, KISS, DAVID BOWIE, T. REX, THE BEATLES and THE ROLLING STONES. I didn't like most "commercial" radio music. I especially hated and detested, with an EXTREME passion crap like "Magnets and Steel" by Walter "crooner" Egan, and "Lido Shuffle" by Boz "yeah, my name is stupid, so what" Skaggs, and "Undercover Angel" by some-fucking-lame-ass-one-hit-nobody-whose-name-I-can't-remember. Geezus, it was enough to drive a small boy absolutely mental. I saw the Sex Pistols on T.V., on some ABC SPECIAL on the emerging new music called PUNK ROCK. I thought they were weird, yet strangely fascinating at the same time. They'd already broken up by the time I bought *NEVER MIND THE BOLLOCKS* at the local K-MART record department (I lived in a small town in Ontario, Canada, okay?) just before I entered grade nine. I soon got turned onto a lot of other PUNK ROCK, NEW WAVE and POWERPOP music. Later on, I discovered garage/60s punk and psychedelia, and spent a great deal of my time seeking out, and writing about current, and some 1960s garage-punk bands in my zine, *Cryptic Tymex*.

I started *Cryptic Tymex* in 1990, when I lived back east, in Canada, and did three issues out there, one in Vancouver and the last issue (number five) here in Seattle. Lisa and I found that we worked well together on that last issue of *Cryptic Tymex*. It was also a lot of work, but we realized that we enjoyed doing the retrospective stuff because we're kinda like detectives of all things weird. So, after *Cryptic* was laid to rest so to speak, I concentrated on picking up some freelance writing for other mags (which I still do). When I first started toying with the idea of quitting self-publishing, I always knew in the back of mind I'd probably want to do it again. I pitched the idea to Lisa of doing a retrospective '70s punk mag a couple of years ago, originally thinking of calling it *Screaming Fist*. When Lisa realized she missed having a fanzine around, she pitched it back to me with the idea that it could encompass not just '70s punk, but all sorts of '70s "underground" sounds. This, to me, seemed like a pretty cool idea and would give me a chance to tap into all these ridiculous records I've accumulated over the years. It was one night, while listening to Radio Birdman that I said, "Hey, why not call it *Do The Pop*?"

With the recent surge in popularity of punk rock, we believe it's important for people to realize where a lot of this all started. Popular bands like The Offspring, Green Day, Nirvana, Supersuckers, New Bomb Turks, D-Generation, Screeching Weasel, Rancid, all of them can be traced back to roots in '70s punk. Bands are covering '70s punk and powerpop songs, and people are forming bands with a total '77 Punk sound in mind. Not dissimilar to the early '80s "paisley underground" and '60s revival bands from the last decade. A few years ago, I predicted a resurgence in popularity of '77 punk, and I'm glad my prophecy has come true. With *Do The Pop*, we hope to bring you the best from that otherwise tasteless decade, the '70s.

One thing you may notice in this mag is just how much crossover of influences there is amongst the groups featured. Many of the bands featured in this debut issue have been influenced by other bands in the issue. For instance, it seemed fitting to feature articles on the MC5 and Stooges, even though they technically began in the 1960s. Their influence on bands such as the Viletones, Radio Birdman and the Droogs is undeniable. Some people from bands have even worked with each other. The fact that Radio Birdman, a band so completely inspired by the Stooges and MC5, would later spawn a combo (the New Race) which featured members of all three bands, proves this point even more.

I'd like to say right off the bat that in no way are we concerned with being retro, even though we're a retrospective mag. I mean, we're into modern groups too, you know? Me, I couldn't be happier to see a resurgence of this kind of sound from new groups. That sound, even if it has become somewhat more "commercially viable" is still a sound that I personally dig - DIG? There's something about the energy that PUNK ROCK had that I couldn't find anywhere else. To me, PUNK ROCK wasn't calculated and pretentious like mainstream ROCK was (looking back at it, and with the benefit of

a few more years of knowledge gaining has shown me that PUNK ROCK was also prone to those faults). So, call me a "nostalgiousist" (on second thought, don't, 'cause that's not even a real word), but I do still love the punk rock music of that decade. You see, when I was back there in secondary school, a "friend" told me that there was "no way" I'd be listening to stuff "like the Sex Pistols" when I was over 21. Well, either I'll never be older than 21, or he was wrong. So, if I saw that "friend" tomorrow (which really does belong to us, by the way) asked me "why?" then I'd have to say "because I still like them, you stupid jerk!" I still love a lot of music from that era, and that's what this magazine was started for. Concentrating on predominantly '70s punk/powerpop/garage band music, we hope to shed some light on bands that deserved more ATTENTION.

Cuddly nihilist
by Lisa

DO THE POP was conceived on a dark and foggy night in December 1994 when both of us were working too much, having too little fun, and on top of it all, the sun was setting at an ungodly 4 p.m.

Suddenly, I thought, I miss having a fanzine in the family. And when I proposed the idea to Alan, he admitted the same. After Issue 5 of *CRYPTIC TYMES*, when Alan announced he was quitting self-publishing, he concentrated on writing for other people and on his normal day job, and I was working hard at my store. But as any self-publisher knows, it's addictive. It's like having your own platform to say, "This is what we like. These bands are to be worshipped. We pay for this with our own money, and we do all the work. So there."

That was 10 months ago. With a lot of research, interviews and writing invested, here goes our latest project. The contents henceforth will represent the 1970s punk, power-pop and new wave explosions. This is the music that shaped our lives as kids. Through this labor of love, we got the golden opportunity to talk to some of our favorite artists, which was a supreme thrill (thanks, all of you).

DO THE POP lets us pay tribute to our favorite yet sadly underrated bands. It also gives me something to think about when I'm driving on I-90, or spending all day in the shopping mall. Music has always been my escape. I have spent many a rainy night stuck in traffic listening to the beautiful melodies featured within. We figured this was the least we could do.

Here at DO THE POP world headquarters, high atop First Hill, we receive mail by the bag, of course. Before we move on, I'd like to answer two questions that we've been asked by several of our letter writers.

Q: Are you two married, or brother and sister, or what?

A: We are married, recognized both in the eyes of the State of Washington and the deity of our choice. If we were brother and sister, marriage would be illegal, so it's a good thing we're not.

Q: Are both of you Canadian?

A: Alan is a native of Ontario. Lisa was born and raised in Seattle, eh?

Here are a few random facts for your consumption: Did you know that more than half of the states' legislatures oppose protection of a woman's right to choose abortion, and that it takes only two-thirds of the states to propose a constitutional amendment? And did you know that WordPerfect spell check reads fallen former Sen. Bob Packwood's last name as "Pokeweed"? Plus, Ben Weasel predicted that the Mariners and the Dodgers would win the AL and NL West, respectively. And he was right all along! Wow! AND HOW ABOUT THOSE MARINERS!

Oh, one more thing. We do want to give credit where credit is due, so we used the following equipment when preparing DO THE POP: Canon Imnova 486S desktop, Sharp 9700AT laptop with Windows 95, WordPerfect 6.0 and Microsoft Publisher 2.0, x-acto blades, non-repro pencils, glue stick, set square, ruler and Art Chantry's halftone machine.



The night is coming, and it's filled with

Dark Surprise



Inside the legend of Radio Birdman

by Lisa

*I went downtown
For something to do
I couldn't find nothing
Said I couldn't find nothing to do
I was hanging 'round in bars
I was wasting time
Your face made a pass
Look like a lousy dime*

*'Cos you're never alone with a Smith and Wesson, baby
You're never alone when you come around here
Wild kinetic rivers of sorrow
Riding to hell on rails of fear*

*I was sitting in a restaurant
Waiting for six a.m.
The waitress was rough
And the milk was skim
Sunlight blasting through the window
Nearly drove me blind
Just like the light
On the front of that 12:05*

*'Cos you're never alone with a Smith and Wesson, baby
You're never alone when you come around here
Wild kinetic rivers of sorrow
Riding to hell on rails of fear*

*Night eyes shining
Like Valparaiso street lights
Wasted dogs were hanging 'round the dawn
Visions fading down
The streets of science
The lizard king is leading me on...*



Deniz Tek

In late 1971, an American medical student named Deniz Tek finished travelling around the world, only to find himself in Australia with a guitar and an armload of Stooges, MC5 and Alice Cooper records. Little did he know that less than five years later, he and five friends would storm the continent, wreaking havoc and blowing minds in their path.

The band, of course, was none other than the legendary Radio Birdman, fanatical purveyors of such Detroit hard rock, as well as surf music and seminal British Invasion bands like the Kinks, the Yardbirds and The Rolling Stones. "I lived in Ann Arbor, and I was too young to go to bars, so I went to all these outdoor concerts that they used to put on in 1968 or so," Deniz says. "There was a strong radical community in Ann Arbor in those days, and there were these huge outdoor concerts in Gallup Park with like six or seven bands, mostly local, but often the headliner would be someone nationally famous, like Johnny Winter, Janis Joplin or Blue Cheer. Local groups I remember seeing did include the Psychedelic Stooges and the MC5, as well as the Frost, the Up, SRC, Wilson Mower Pursuit, Lyman Woodard, The Rationals, Tim Buckley, One String Sam, etc. It was always mixed with politics, of course. I went to a lot of all-ages gigs at ballrooms, particularly the Big Steel and the Fifth Dimension. We saw Ted Nugent, when he was in the Amboy Dukes, and they had this hit that year, 1968, with 'Journey to The Centre of Your Mind.'

"Most kids in my high school regarded the Stooges as a joke; either they loved them or they thought they were stupid," Deniz adds. "I mean, they would take a microphone and stick it into a blender for 20 minutes for a song!"

In 1972, just months after his arrival in Australia, Deniz joined the Screaming White Hot Razor Blades, which evolved into The Cunning Stunts, and eventually into TV Jones. That band found a loyal following in Wollangong, a steel town south of Sydney, where the crowds appreciated their interpretive covers of all the above bands. By the end of 1974 Deniz was unceremoniously kicked out of TV Jones, partly because of his unpopular ideas for the group's aggressive direction. TV Jones played a number of Deniz' originals, including the tunes "I-94," "Burn My Eye," "Smith and Wesson Blues" and "Snake," which would eventually be part of the Birdman set. Future Radio Birdman keyboardist Pip Hoyle (like Deniz, a medical student) was also an occasional member of the ensemble. Meanwhile, up in Sydney four lads going as The Rats were bashing out tunes by the Stooges, MC5 (no mean feat in Australia at the time), as well as the Velvet Underground and the New York Dolls.

Pip attended medical school classes with Deniz, and they met because Pip was always eating alone in the cafeteria and he looked lonely, so Deniz sat with him. Pip played piano, but he'd never played rock 'n' roll, just free jazz and some classical. He played with TV Jones for awhile but, according to Deniz, "those guys didn't like him because they thought he couldn't play straight time." Of course he could and later did, but what did those guys know? After all, they kicked Deniz Tek out of their band!

Deniz shared a house with The Rats' drummer Ron Keeley, an ex-Navy man from Perth, and through him he met The Rats' vocalist Rob Younger, who of course would go on to gloriously front Radio Birdman, and the rest is history. Although the band lasted less than five years, their influence can still be felt around the globe. Radio Birdman ideally served as the perfect bridge between high-energy early '70s hard rock and the punk rock explosion of 1977.

"I met Rob because he was in a band called The Rats with Ron Keeley, who I shared a student house with," Deniz explains. "He and I had met by total random chance, I had just answered an ad on a student bulletin board. Rob was the only guy I met in Australia who

TV JONES



TV Jones (Deniz is in the middle), 1974

had heard of all the American, and especially Detroit, bands that I liked. So, he and I talked music. Rob just knew about stuff that a lot of Australian guys didn't. We really hit it off as pals right away, and we were both in the Rats and TV Jones when we met, so we organized gigs for our bands together."

The Radio Birdman moniker was chosen one night at French's Bar in Sydney, by Rob, Deniz, Ron and the group's original bassist, ex-Rat Carl Rourke, after the line in the Stooges' "1970," where Iggy says, "Radio burnin', up above," or, "Radio birdman, up above," depending on how you listen to it! Ah, semantics! Birdman played its first gig in the waning days of 1974. Four weeks later, Warwick Gilbert was brought in to replace the floundering Carl on bass. Warwick's burgeoning graphic design skills helped Radio Birdman create a distinctive look as well as sound.

"The New York Dolls were a huge influence on all of us, but especially on Rob," Deniz says. "We borrowed a lot from them in the early days. Now Rob has his own style, but in the early days he sounded just like David Johansen! Also, the Velvet Underground were a huge influence on us, as were Captain Beefheart and Bob Dylan in terms of lyrics. I'd say for music it'd be the Yardbirds, Amboy Dukes, The Who and James Brown.

"In fact, when you listen to James Brown's *Live At The Apollo* album, you'll hear the riff from 'Hand Of Love' in the introduction! We liked Blue Oyster Cult's first three albums a lot, and we covered a bunch of songs off of those records, like 'Career or Evil' and 'The Red and The Black.'"

In October 1975 Pip, disgruntled with rock 'n' roll and having lost his girlfriend to Rob, quit the group, and Canadian transplant Chris Masuak, who had been playing guitar in The Jackals, replaced him on piano and organ. A month later, Chris left to visit his father in Canada, and Pip was in turn brought back as his temporary replacement. Eventually, the six-piece reformed with Chris on rhythm guitar, along with "emcees" Johnny Kannis and Mark Sisto on occasional harmony vocals.

A Birdman gig was indeed an event, and with the band becoming more powerful musically, they soon attracted a small but rabid band of followers across Sydney. However, as strong and powerful as the group was, so was the negative response from overwhelmed pub owners who, unsurprisingly, didn't really "get" Radio Birdman. The band then set up semi-permanent residence at the Oxford Tavern

in Taylor Square, Darlinghurst. The Oxford had hosted rock groups since the '60s, but none like Birdman, and as the months went by, they attracted more and more fans. By mid 1976, both Deniz and Pip were finishing up their medical studies, so time was limited, and practices and gigs were arranged around their schedules.

*I know what motivates you
But I don't know what activates you
You know how to accelerate
But I just need a break*

*You don't want to know no time
You just want my O-mind
You just want what you just want
But that's all right*

*'Cos I'm dyin' to be your snake
I want to crawl right up your legs
Crawl right through your mind
Leave you crying
Oh, I'm dyin' to be your snake
I want to burn right up your rails
Burn right through your mind
Leave you dyin'...*

*Talking street freak jive
About how nothin' matters
You didn't need those nuns and freaks
Hopeless worlds you shattered*

*You told me about Chicago
That time you felt so lowdown
'54 Strat was useless
I didn't need no showdown*

*'Cos I'm dyin' to be your snake
I want to crawl right up your legs
Crawl right through your mind
Leave you crying
Oh, I'm dyin' to be your snake
I want to burn right up your rails
Burn right through your mind
Leave you dyin'...*

In March 1976 Radio Birdman performed a live broadcast for Sydney FM radio station 2JJ and, after winning *Rock Australia Magazine's* "Punk Band Thriller," began recording material for their first EP with the grand prize recording session. "Burn My Eye" was sold via mail order through one advertisement in *RAM*. The single sold out quickly, and the band played another live radio broadcast. By this time, Birdman had made an undeniable impact on the Sydney music scene. Success didn't come without a few less-than-stellar experiences, however. One gig in rural Armidale had the band playing to a black-tie audience mixed of teenagers and some over-



"There couldn't possibly be a better live band in the country." *RAM Magazine*. Chris Masuak, Rob Younger, Warwick Gilbert, Deniz Tek, Ron Keeley, 1976.

50-year-old members of the local Lions' Club when the booker made a small judgement error. After three songs, the concert organizer begged them to stop playing. With his hands planted firmly over his ears, the organizer offered the band food in return for silence.

Radio Birdman adopted a militaristic look about them, including their legendary symbol, which band members wore on armbands. The logo, a representation of a flying saucer coming through the middle of eagle's wings, served to give the band a strong visual identity and group spirit, but it also led some to accuse them of supporting fascism, which could not be farther from the truth. Music, imagery and energy equalled Radio Birdman, who would stop at virtually nothing to shock their audiences. When a fan threw a human skull filled with lamb's brains onto the stage, Rob didn't hesitate to eat the brains and spit them back at the audience.

"We were always into 'visuals,' and we were always looking for things to do," Deniz says. "At that time I guess you could say we were like performance artists. We used to burn radios, and smash TVs on stage and things. We liked to surprise our audience. Boy, were we surprised when they all left!" Alas, genius often goes unrecognized at its time.

In early 1977, Radio Birdman's "home" venue, the Oxford Tavern, was threatened with demolition, so the lads took it over, sparing the place at least for the time being. Renamed the Oxford Funhouse (again in homage to the Stooges) a whole new scene of bands cropped up there, including The Hellcats and Psycho Surgeons, both of whom gigged with Birdman and played music in a similar vein. At this time, Birdman was at its peak, and the group began placing ads in *RAM*, looking for other bands to gig with, thus spawning a whole circuit of bands and venues. Deniz left for the U.S. for a three-month visit, and the band stopped playing in his absence, but upon his return, Radio Birdman played their first gigs in Melbourne. Even though they were independently promoted, basically on a word-of-mouth basis, the shows were packed with rabid Birdman fans, and a slew of press coverage (some of it even positive!) followed. Afterward, Birdman did a short tour of southern New South Wales with The Hellcats opening for them.



Deniz and Rob. Deniz is playing the guitar he bought from the MC5's Fred "Sonic" Smith.

*Took a ride on the ocean
Started swimming out
Lost sight of land
Time ran out
Arms getting heavy
Exhaustion's setting in
Waves getting bigger
Life's getting thin
My brain was screaming
My mind said no
My mouth was bleeding
Said you gotta go*

*Hit the high side
Monster wave
Buried at sea
In an early grave
Free fall dive
Thousand foot pit
Cliffs of water turning
Adrenochrome hit*

*Death-like animals
The death of slaves
The death of humans
Getting sucked away
Ships, trucks and planes
A million screaming heads
Agonized moaning
From the island of the dead*

*I'm going down
Into the maelstrom
Going down
Gonna drown*

Alive... alive... alive

I'm alive...

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In June 1977, Radio Birdman's debut LP *Radios Appear* was released on Trafalgar Records, after a year of sporadic recording. The album's title was taken from a line in the Blue Oyster Cult song, "Dominance and Submission," written by punk diva Patti Smith. The record was initially distributed through mail order and independent record stores. But *Radios Appear* sold enormously well for an independent release, and within a month of release, WEA Records Australia offered the band national distribution, which they readily accepted. *Radios Appear* debuted on the Australian charts at #72, but soon jumped to #35.

The band recorded the album for a mere \$7,000 but it managed to capture some of the manic intensity of their live performances.

Shortly after the album's release, the band appeared on the Australian Broadcasting Company's "Real Thing" TV show, and their Sept. 21, 1977 gig at the Merryatville Hotel in Adelaide was taped for ABC's "Rockturnal" show, which has been broadcast in Australia several times, along with some interesting comments from band members.

"It's the kind of music we like to play," Deniz explains on the tape. "It's our favorite music to listen to, and that's why we like to play it." Pip adds, "(Our) music may seem aggressive, because it's high energy. A lot of our songs are (aggressive), but a lot of them aren't. A lot of times, the audiences don't understand the difference between high-energy and aggression."

Regarding his own overwhelming stage presence, Rob offers: "Sometimes I'm not aware of what I do, yet somehow, I get it all in. How 'bout that?!"

Pip does the majority of the talking in this interview segment. "There's a difference between assertiveness and aggression," he explains. "Aggression is an invasive sort of thing. For us, it's more of an assertiveness in what we're trying to do."

"I don't care if it does seem aggressive particularly," Pip adds, "but it's more of an assertiveness than an aggression. It's an attempt to make our statement, forcefully if necessary, but it's not an attempt to force people to adopt it."



Top: Warwick Gilbert, bass; Pip Hoyle, piano, organ; Middle: Ron Keeley, drums; Chris Masuak, guitar, harmony vocals; Bottom: Deniz Tek, guitar, harmony vocals; Rob Younger, vocals.



Pip, entourage member Mark Sisto and Deniz in London, 1978.

On the subject of the band's popularity, Pip explains, "What we've got isn't really commercially viable, I don't think. It might be, for awhile, like some passing fad." When the interviewer asks the band members if they think their fame will last, Pip answers, "I think our commitment to it will. I don't think our popularity will, particularly, though. You know, that's the luck of the game. It happens to everybody. If we wanted to do commercially viable music — perennially viable music — we could. Technically, we'd have no problems playing it at all."

Chris offers a less cerebral approach to the Birdman phenomenon: "We've got these songs, right? We just try to play them as best we can. We put our whole selves into it. By all indications, by the way we look to the audience, it must look like we're aggressive. But that's all it means; we're just putting everything into what we play."

Pip sums up with, "The music comes first. It's not our personal feeling. We love to feel satisfied by it. The way we feel the music goes is what really determines it, rather than what we feel inside."

"And if the audience doesn't like the music, it doesn't matter, provided we're satisfied with it!"

Some shrewd bootlegger taped the Nov. 30 show at the Eureka Hotel in Geelong, Victoria, and the result was later copied overseas, albeit with abysmal sound quality, much to the dismay of the band. "We were really mad about that at the time," says Deniz. "But when we first heard about it, we really didn't mind, because we were told that the guy who had taped it was a huge Radio Birdman fan, and he was training to be an Olympic swimmer. The story we heard — which all turned out to be a lie — was that he would listen to Birdman while he was swimming laps, and one day the stereo fell into the pool, and he was electrocuted! Supposedly, the album was put out in his memory, but it wasn't true." The bootlegged show, in which the band covered "L.A. Woman," "Let The Kids Dance," "Kick Out The Jams," "King of the Surf" and "California Sun," was released in Australia as *Eureka Birdman*, and later repackaged for American release as *Where The Action Is*, after an article about the band in *Bomp!* magazine.

But by this stage, Sire Records head Seymour Stein, who had met some success with the Saints and Ramones, had their interest piqued by Radio Birdman. The band eventually signed to Sire, and they mutually decided to have their international debut be a reworked version of *Radios Appear*, with a few new tracks and a new cover. The band re-recorded "New Race," while they simply read the vocals for "Do The Pop" and "Descent Into the Maelstrom," and added piano to "Murder City Nights." The Australian release of the Sire record had a sticker on the front, pointing out that this was essentially the same product consumers had seen before.

"We insisted on 'warning' consumers in Australia that much of this record was the same stuff," Deniz says, although the records are slightly different. For instance, the Sire version omits the originals "Love Kills" and "Monday Morning Gunk," as well as their excellent cover of the Stooges' "TV Eye," but adds the phenomenal "Aloha Steve and



Van of Hate-era Birdman on tour in Europe, 1978.

Danno," one of the band's newer songs, and a great cover of the 13th Floor Elevators' "You're Gonna Miss Me."

"Aloha Steve and Danno" was written after the first version of *Radios Appear* came out, during the mid-period, when Rob was just beginning to write songs," Deniz explains. "He came to me with the lyrics, and I thought they were pretty cool! Some of those early Radio Birdman songs were actually from TV Jones, like 'I-94,' 'Descent Into the Maelstrom' and 'Monday Morning Gunk.'

"But 'Aloha...' was purely the product of Australia, and the country has gone through tremendous changes within the past 20 years," Deniz adds. "I mean, you couldn't even buy alcohol on Sundays, because everything was closed, but *Hawaii Five-O* was on! We used to stockpile alcohol, and go over to John Needham's house, watch *Hawaii Five-O* and just get off on the campiness of it. That song is actually one episode of the show, Rob just wrote down the plot!"

By this time Radio Birdman attracted a rabid cult following, as the letters to their fan club reveal. Members received Birdman patches to affix to their clothing, and in 1986, a fan wearing her badge in the backstreets of Krakow, Poland, was accosted by a wild-eyed Pole who muttered the words Radio Birdman in a thick accent. The Fan Club had over 300 members at one point, all of whom were assigned "code names," like WarLord, Satan's Hog N.P.A.A. or Cloven Skull. All of this worship, and more is documented in Vivien Johnson's book *Radio Birdman* (1990), published by Sheldon Booth, Australia.

This tome, perhaps the ultimate tribute to any band, is now sadly out of print, but is still worth finding if at all possible. Johnson, a Sydney writer and sociologist, analyzes Birdman as not just a rock 'n' roll band, but as an Australian cultural phenomenon, drawing comparisons to Aboriginal art and rituals. And if writing a book about the band isn't enough proof of her devotion to Birdman, Johnson even drove across the United States with Deniz while researching the book.

With an international release under their belts, the band embarked on their next logical step, a European tour. After one more live broadcast to 2JJ, they headed off to England in February 1978, where they gigged to British punk fans. The result was sort of a mutual disdain: the British punk fans didn't understand Birdman's long hair, while the band found themselves at odds with the punk scene. Basically the band went over like the proverbial lead balloon, and thus didn't receive much touring support from Sire. But the label believed in the band enough to send them to Dave Edmunds' Rockfield Studios in Wales, where the Flamin' Groovies had recorded. The band recorded 18 tracks at Rockfield, including three older songs that they redid: "I-94," "Smith and Wesson Blues" and "Burn My Eye." Sire arranged for a fall 1978 release of the album, and even spoke of an American tour. But first, the band agreed to go on the road, opening for the Flamin' Groovies in Europe. The bands played four gigs together, but then the Groovies' guitarist, Cyril Jordan, cut his hand, and the tour was cancelled. This change in plans resulted in one interesting and unplanned double bill.

"We ended up playing with Van Halen in Amsterdam," Deniz says. "But the audience was so stoned, they probably didn't even notice! That place was like one big haze of marijuana smoke!"

But the stress of touring took its toll on the group, and after their American tour plans were cancelled in May, and one of the members had scrawled "Van of Hate" on the side of their touring

vehicle, Birdman called it quits after a June 10, 1978 gig in Oxford, England. The combination of internal band tension and a complete lack of interest on the part of the British audiences contributed to the group's demise, and, one by one, the individual members found their way back to Australia, and onto other projects.

But what about the Rockfield sessions?, the band members wondered. Somehow a cassette had gotten back to Australia, and, much to the dismay of the band, had been making rounds on the underground bootleg circuit. Deniz tried in vain for years to get the master tapes back from Sire, in hopes of getting the record released in Australia, at the very least. But unbeknownst to Sire or anyone else at the time, Deniz had slyly made a reference copy of the tape and had hidden it away for safekeeping. After getting nowhere with Sire, Deniz finally decided to press and release the album himself. *Living Eyes* finally saw release in 1981 on Trafalgar Records.



Cheers from the French Radio Birdman Fan Club president in Paris.

After Birdman, the members went various directions, but often played together. Rob went into The Other Side as soon as Birdman broke up, and Deniz played in the Visitors with Pip and Ron, plus Steve Harris on bass, and Mark Sisto on vocals. Their remastered CD has recently been reissued on Red Eye. In 1981 Deniz, Rob and Warwick Gilbert joined forces with Ron Asheton of the Stooges and Dennis Thompson from the MC5 to form the New Race. This unit embarked on a 18-show tour of Australia, and released a live album called *The First And The Last*. The New Race covered four Birdman songs, one MC5 tune and "November 22, 1963," by Destroy All Monsters, Ron Asheton's post-Stooges outfit. In 1982 the Visitors released their self-titled album on Citadel, which is just now being rereleased on CD. Chris Masuak and Warwick Gilbert both served time in the Hitmen, and all members have done other projects, often collaborating with one another. Rob now leads the New Christs, and Deniz has had a successful solo career while living with his wife Angie Pepper and their children in Montana.



Yeah, hup!

Where Birdman Has Flown

by Alan

With this column we hope to track the musical exploits of ex-members of Radio Birdman. Since this is the first installment of this column, we'll also try to fill in some of the gaps in our Radio Birdman article as well. When Radio Birdman called it quits in 1978, Rob Younger formed the Other Side, a band which was meant to include Deniz Tek also, but he decided to continue on with his medical studies back in the States. The Other Side only stayed together for about 15 months, and played mostly cover tunes. In 1981, Deniz returned to Australia with Dennis Thompson (MC5) and Ron Asheton (Stooges) in tow. Hooking up with Rob Younger and Warwick Gilbert, they formed the New Race to do a one-off Australian tour. They performed a mixture of Birdman, Stooges, MC5 and covers, documenting it on the live *The First and the Last* LP. The French label Revenge also released a semi-legit LP of different live recordings called *The First To Pay* in 1990.

The Visitors included Deniz Tek, Pip Hoyle and Ron Keeley from Birdman, plus former Birdman Minister of Defense, Mark Sisto on vocals. (Sisto had substituted, along with Johnny Kannis, as a vocalist for a final Birdman gig that Rob refused to play). They released a single in 1980, one EP and an LP in 1982, all on the Citadel label.

The Hitmen were led by occasional Birdman backing vocalist Johnny Kannis. They formed in 1977, and included Ron Keeley, Chris Masuak and Warwick Gilbert from Birdman. They released one single in 1977 as Johnny and the Hitmen ("King of the Surf"/"Under The Boardwalk"). Masuak stayed with the group until their demise in 1982, while other ex-Birdman members floated in and out of the group, which at one time or another also included Mark Kingsmill and Brad Shepherd, later of the Hoodoo Gurus. Coincidentally, Shepherd had also played in the seminal Aussie punk band the Fun Things, who released an EP in 1980 entitled *Where The Birdmen Fly*. Angie Pepper also appeared with the group from time-to-time. The Hitmen were briefly reactivated in 1989 for another EP, and in 1991 for another LP on which Deniz Tek plays some guitar. Sometime in between the Hitmen's demise and subsequent revival, Kannis put together a crazed "mystery band" called the Psychotic Turnbuckles. Decked out in outlandish wigs and wrestling costumes, these cryptic kings of chaos began performing sporadically and releasing EPs and LPs of aggressive garage-rock. While it has been rumored that certain ex-Birdman members have played incognito in the Turnbuckles, this has been denied by the Turnbuckles themselves. Rob Younger did, however, produce some 1985 Turnbuckles sessions, which would come out on two different 12-inch EPs on the Survival label. A new ten-inch release of Psychotic Turnbuckles material is due out sometime soon on the Las Vegas-based Behemoth records. Chris "Klondike" Masuak also played in the Screaming Tribesmen from 1982-87, appearing on their first four EPs and sole LP, *Bones and Flowers*.

Between bouts as a doctor, jet fighter pilot and potential astronaut, Deniz Tek has sporadically made solo recordings, as well. While training aeronautics in Houston, Texas, Tek recorded a version of the Four Speeds' surf song "RPM," backed up by the punk band Really Red. The song appeared on the first *Battle of the Garages* compilation LP on Vox records in 1981. In 1982, Citadel released *Orphan Tracks*, a collection of Deniz Tek odds and ends, including an early recording by TV Jones, and tracks recorded with Angie Pepper. Deniz was fairly inactive up until his next solo release, the *Take It To The Vertical* album. Released in 1992 on the Australian Red Eye/Polydor label, the CD features Birdman alumnus Chris Masuak on second guitar, and pal Scott Asheton on drums. His most recent CD release is *Outside*, (Red Eye), which came out in 1994. *Outside* features excellent musical backing from the likes of Kent Steadman (New Christs/Celibate Rifles), Jim Dickson (ex-New Christs and Barracudas) on bass, Nik Rieth on drums and former Birdman cohort Pip Hoyle on klavier, Chris Masuak guests on guitar and Deniz's wife Angie Pepper contributes backing vocals. There are eleven songs on this release, but initial versions of the CD come with a four-song bonus disc. Picking up where Deniz's last release, the *Take It To The Vertical* album left off, there's enough Birdman-style rockers to please most fans, plus some different stuff. "Condition Black," "Searching" and the

Come on baby it's time to move
You've been saying there's nothing to do
Don't be afraid of bustin' out of your cage
Gonna cruise around gonna burn up the stage

RADIO BIRDMAN'S DENIZ TEK

**Friday
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**New Australian
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title track are all particularly engaging and rocking numbers. On the bonus CD is an unreleased song called "1968," plus an acoustic version of "Searching," an instrumental version of "Rough Slide Drag" and a different mix of the title track. Deniz has also been playing shows in both the U.S. (Los Angeles, mostly), where he uses the punk band Exploding Fuck Dolls as his backing band. When he plays in Australia, he uses the band on the *Outside* CD.

Rob Younger, after a brief flirtation with retirement from the music biz, formed the New Christs in 1981, initially with Chris Masuak, who played with the band until 1986. Sporadic at best, the Christs have had numerous line-up changes over the years. Rob has also performed with the excellent Aussie band the Celibate Rifles. A live bootleg EP, recorded in Jurgenzentrum, Germany in 1988, is from a tour they did together. Rob also produced the Rifles' 1992 LP *Heaven On A Stick*. By the way, the Rifles latest CD, *Spaceman In A Satin Suit* (on the Hot label) is good, and comes highly recommended by Deniz Tek. The New Christs are back in action and recently released on Lance Rock records a ten-inch vinyl release called *Pedestal*. This is the first New Christs material in quite a while (since the *Distemper* LP from 1989), and band members this time around include Rob on lead vocals; Bill Gibson on guitar, organ and vocals; Tony Harper on guitar; Christian Houlemare on bass; and Peter Kelly on drums. Only four songs on this one, but these are four great songs! Side one has two excellent originals, including the heavy title track which shows that Aussie bands also know how to mine that Blue Cheer/Stooges territory. "The Way You Suck Me Down" is a more somber tune with some nice keyboard touches and a more "psychedelic" feel. Side two has Rob and the New Christs covering two '60s gems: Love's "She Comes In Colors," augmented by some trumpet courtesy of drummer Peter Kelly, and the Who's "The Seeker." As with most of these ten-inch things, pressings are limited so you may want to pick one of these up before they're gone. Lance Rock has also released a New Christs "best of" CD called *Born Out Of Time* and will be putting another ten-inch of new material soon. If the material we've heard is any indication, it'll be a killer!

Finally, Red Eye has also reissued a remastered *Radios Appear* and a remixed *Living Eyes*, with four bonus tracks that were recorded at Rockfield Studios: "Didn't Tell The Man," "Dark Surprise," "Alien Skies" and "If I Wanted To." A live Birdman release is scheduled for release in 1995, as well. In the meantime, Red Eye has reissued the New Race *The First and the Last*, and the Visitors material on CD. You can obtain info about these, and subsequent Birdman-related releases from Red Eye, GPO Box 211, Sydney 2001, Australia. Another good mailorder source for Aussie rock is Au Go-Go, GPO Box 542D, Melbourne 3001, Victoria, Australia.

RADIO BIRDMAN DISCOGRAPHY

Plus: *Visitors, New Race, Deniz Tek, Angie Pepper, New Christs, Hiltmen, Chris Masuak, Johnny Kannis and Screaming Tribesmen*
"Burn My Eye" 7-inch EP October 1976 (Trafalgar Records ME109)
Track listing: Smith and Wesson Blues/Snake/I-94/Burned My Eye
"New Race"/"TV Eye" 7-inch single June 1977 (Trafalgar Records TRS-11)

Radios Appear LP October 1977 (Trafalgar Records TRL-1001/Australia)

Track listing: *TV Eye/Murder City Nights/Anglo Girl Desire/Man With Golden Helmet/Descent Into The Maelstrom/Monday Morning Gunk/Do The Pop/Love Kills/Hand of Law/New Race*

RADIO BIRDMAN • RADIOS APPEAR



(OVERSEAS VERSION)

Radios Appear (Overseas) LP May 1978 (Trafalgar Records TRL-102/Australia; Sire SRK 6050/US and UK)

Track listing: *What Gives?/Non-Stop Girls/Do The Pop/Man With Golden Helmet/Descent Into The Maelstrom/New Race/Aloha Steve and Danno/Anglo Girl Desire/Murder City Nights/You're Gonna Miss Me/Hand of Law/Hit Them Again*

"Aloha Steve and Danno"/"Anglo Girl Desire" 7-inch single May 1978 (Trafalgar Records/WEA TRS-12/Australia)

"What Gives?"/"Anglo Girl Desire" 7-inch single August 1978 (Sire Records 6078/UK)

"What Gives?"/"Murder City Nights" 7-inch single May 1978 (Sire Records SRE 1014/US) Never released
 Living Eyes LP March 1981 (WEA 600085/Australia)

Track listing: *More Fun/TPBR Combo/455 SD/Do The Movin' Change/I-94/Iskender Time/Burn My Eye '78/Time To Fall/Smith And Wesson Blues/Crying Sun/Breaks My Heart/Alone In The Endzone/Hanging On*

"Alone In The Endzone"/"Breaks My Heart" 7-inch single April 1981 (WEA 100160/Australia)

Soldiers of Rock 'n Roll LP 1982 (WEA YEAHUP-1/Australia)

Track listing: *TV Eye/Man With Golden Helmet/More Fun/Love Kills/New Race; audio documentary, also includes interview with Chris Masuak*

Radios Appear (Overseas) LP with Living Eyes LP 1984 (Big Time LTD-501/Australia)

Under The Ashes Box Set 1988 (Trafalgar/WEA LOC-999/Australia)

Contains: *Radios Appear LP/Radios Appear (Overseas) LP/Living Eyes LP/The First And The Last, by the New Race LP/Burn My Eye 12-inch single/More Fun 12-inch single/Aloha Steve and Danno 7-inch single*

"More Fun" 12-inch single 1988 (WEA 0.2577825/Australia)

Track listing: *Dark Surprise/Breaks My Heart/More Fun/Didn't Tell The Man*

Under The Ashes double CD set 1992 (WEA 255991-2/Australia)

Track listing: *TV Eye/Monday Morning Gunk/Love Kills/Snake/I-94/Burn My Eye/What Gives?/Non-Stop Girls/Do The Pop/Man With Golden Helmet/Descent Into The Maelstrom/New Race/Aloha Steve and Danno/Anglo Girl Desire/Murder City Nights/You're Gonna Miss Me/Hand of Law/Hit Them Again/More Fun/TPBR*

Combo/455 SD/Do The Movin' Change/Iskender Time/Time To Fall/Smith And Wesson Blues/Crying Sun/Breaks My Heart/Alone In The Endzone/Hanging On/Didn't Tell The Man/Dark Surprise
 Radio Birdman: The EPs CD 1992 (East West/Trafalgar 4509907432/Australia)

Track listing: *Smith And Wesson Blues/Snake/I-94/Burned My Eye/Dark Surprise/Breaks My Heart/More Fun/Didn't Tell The Man*
 BOOTLEG RECORDINGS

Eureka Birdman LP

Track listing: *You're Gonna Miss Me/Burned My Eye/Death By The Gun/Let The Kids Dance/Breaks My Heart/L.A. Woman/TV Eye/Aloha Steve and Danno/More Fun/California Sun/King of the Surf/Kick Out The Jams/1970/New Race*

Where The Action Is LP

same as Eureka Birdman

Rock 'n Roll War 1976-1978 LP (Mission/France)

Track listing: *Death By The Gun/Dark Surprise/Didn't Tell The Man/If I Wanted To/Descent Into The Maelstrom/Burn My Eye/Death By The Gun/American Ruse/Insane Alive/Search and Destroy/Snake Surfing at 2JJJ 7-inch single (Compassion Explosion/Australia)*

Track listing: *Surf City/Don't Look Back/Time Won't Let*

Me/Transmaniac MC

Death By The Gun 7-inch single (Compassion Explosion/Australia)

Rockfield studio sessions

Track listing: *Death By The Gun/Didn't Tell The Man/Dark Surprise/If I Wanted*

Live in Sydney 1976 LP 1992 (Italy)

"Burned My Eye" compilation track 1977

Live version, appears on "Long Live The Evolution" (Sire)

"Hand of Law" compilation track 1978

Appears on "Sire Machine Turns You Up" (Sire)

"More Fun" compilation track 1978

Appears on "The Sire Story" promo (Sire/UK)

"Do The Pop" and "Aloha Steve and Danno" compilation tracks 1979

Appear on "Rock New Wave" (Sire/Greece)

VISITORS (Including Deniz Tek, Ron Keeley and Pip Hoyle)

"Brother John" 12-inch single 1980 (Phantom PH-4/Australia)

Track listing: *Brother John/Life Spill/Journey By Sledge/Hell Yes*

"Sad TV"/"Life Spill" 7-inch single (Citadel/Australia) Not released

Visitors LP August 1982 (Citadel CITLP502/Australia)

Track listing: *Brother John/Journey By Sledge/Life Spill/Let's Have Some Fun/Miss You Too Much/Living World/Sad TV/Haunted Road/Euro Girls/Hell Yes/Disperse*

"Hell Yes" compilation track, appears on "Paths Of Pain To The Jewels of Glory" (Phantom PHANTOM100/Australia)

"Euro Girls" compilation track 1987, appears on "Take Everything, Leave Nothing" (Citadel Records CITLP511/Australia)

"Brother John" and "Life Spill" compilation tracks appear on "Red Eye

Appetizer" 1992 (Red Eye INDIGO0632-2/Australia)

ANGIE PEPPER AND DENIZ TEK, with Rob Younger

"Frozen World"/"Why Tell Me?" 7-inch single 1984 (Citadel Records CIT005/Australia)

"Miss You Too Much" compilation track from "Third Coast Underground" (Challenge LP-C1002/US)

NEW RACE, with Rob Younger, Deniz Tek and Warwick Gilbert, plus Ron Asheton and Dennis Thompson

The First And The Last LP July 1982 (WEA 600120/Australia)

Track listing: *Crying Sun/Haunted Road/Sad TV/Breaks My Heart/Looking At You/November 22, 1963/Alone In The Endzone/Love Kills/Gotta Keep Moving/Hail Columbia*

"Crying Sun"/"Gotta Keep Moving" 7-inch single December 1982 (Citadel CIT002/Australia)

"Hail Columbia"/"Descent Into The Maelstrom" 7-inch single 1990 (Revenge SS4/France)

The First To Pay LP/CD 1990 (Revenge MIG9/France)

Track listing: *Smith And Wesson Blues/Haunted Road/Living*

World/Loose/TV Eye/Love Kills/November 22, 1963/455 SD/Alone In The Endzone/Looking At You/New Race/Hail Columbia

"Crying Sun" compilation track appears on "Take Everything, Leave Nothing" double LP (Citadel CITLP511/Australia)

DENIZ TEK solo

"100 Fools"/"Alien Skies" (by Radio Birdman) 7-inch single 1983

(Citadel CIT003/Australia) B-side was from Rockfield sessions

(instrumental)

Orphan Tracks LP/CD (Revenge MIG13/France)

Track listing: Miss You Too Much/Destination Void/Last Chance/Why Tell Me?/100 Fools/R.P.M./Big Ride/ACM/Sweet Jane/Monday Morning Gunk (from TV Jones sessions, 1974)/Louie Louie "Destination Void"/"Steel Beach" 7-inch single (Revenge SS18/France)

Take It To The Vertical CD September 1992 (Red Eye RED29/Australia)

Track listing: Run Out of Water/Dead If Looks Could Kill/Where Dreams Go/Steel Beach/Don't Axe Me/Me & Gene/Is It Good Enough?/Torpedo Woman/Those Times Are Gone/Ships In Outside CD August 1994 (Red Eye/Polydor/Australia)

Track listing: Blood From A Stone/Day To Ride/Waiting/Give It Up/Dozen On Ice/Searching/Condition Black/Rough Slide Drag/Walking/Outside/Sailors Hymn

Inside Out CD, promotional, August 1994 (Red Eye PROMO1/Australia)

Track listing: 1968/Searching (Acoustic)/Rough Slide Drag (Instrumental)/Outside (KAOSMIX)

"R.P.M." compilation track, backed by Really Red, appears on "Battle of the Garages, Vol. 1" 1981 (Vox VXS-200.006)

"100 Fools" compilation track appears on "Take Everything, Leave Nothing" 1987 (Citadel CITLP511/Australia)

"Run Out Of Water" compilation track appears on "In Store For You" 1992 (Red Eye promo/Australia)

"Run Out of Water" and "Press On" compilation tracks appear on "Red Eye Appetizer" promo 1992 (Red Eye INDIGO0632-2/Australia)

"Condition Black" compilation track, free with Australian Rolling Stone magazine, December 1993



radio birdman living eyes

NEW CHRISTs, with Rob Younger (and Chris Masuak on first three singles)

"Face A New God"/"Waiting World" 7-inch single August 1981 (Green Records LRS-076/Australia)

"Like A Curse"/"Sun God" 7-inch single March 1984 (Big Time Records BTS-1218/Australia)

"Born Out Of Time"/"No Next Time" 7-inch single April 1986 (Citadel CIT017/Australia)

Detritus EP (What Goes On WHATGOES9T/US)

Track listing: Like A Curse/Sun God/Born Out Of Time/No Next Time

"The Black Hole"/"Addiction" 7-inch single 1987 (Citadel CIT031/Australia)

Dropping Like Flies double 7-inch single 1987 (Citadel CITEP905)

Track listing: The Black Hole/Addiction/Dropping Like Flies/I Swear/Dead Girl/You'll Never Catch My Wave

Divine Rites CD (Normal CGAS813CD/Germany)

Track listing: Like A Curse/Sun God/Born Out Of Time/No Next Time/The Black Hole/Addiction/Dropping Like Flies/Dead Girl/I Swear/You'll Never Catch My Wave/I Saw God/Headin' South Distemper LP/CD (Normal CGAS807CD/Germany)

Track listing: No Way On Earth/There's No Time/Another Sin/The March/The Burning of Rome/Afterburn/Circus Of Sour/Coming Apart/Bed of Nails/Love's Underground/Disconnected/Headin' South

"Headin' South"/"I Saw God" 7-inch single (Citadel CIT039/Australia)

"Another Sin"/"Burning of Rome" 7-inch single (Citadel CIT046/Australia)

"I Swear"/"The Black Hole" 7-inch single (Romilar/Spain, free with fanzine)

Pedestal EP 1994 (Lance Rock Records, Canada)

Track listing: Pedestal/The Way You Suck Me Down/She Comes In Colors/The Seeker

Born Out of Time LP/CD Fall 1995 (Lance Rock Records, Canada)

"Like A Curse" and "Born Out of Time" compilation tracks, on "Take Everything Leave Nothing" 1987 (Citadel double LP CITLP511/Australia)

"Headin' South" compilation track, on "Positively Elizabeth St." 1989 (Citadel CITLP523/Australia)

"Waiting World" compilation track, on "Year of the Rat" bootleg LP "Face of a New God" compilation track, on "Where Birdmen Flew" bootleg EP 1989

ROB YOUNGER AND THE CELIBATE RIFLES

Rob And the Rifles, bootleg 7-inch EP, recorded live on July 5, 1988 in Jurgenzentrum, Bachnang, Germany (Compassion Explosion!/U.S.)

Track listing: I-94/She's So Fine/Shaking All Over/It's A Long Way To The Top

JOHNNY KANNIS, with Warwick Gilbert, Chris Masuak and Ron Keeley

"Under the Boardwalk"/"King of the Surf" November 1978 RCA [RCA 103131/Australia]

"King of the Surf"/"Pushin' Too Hard" 1991, Dog Meat (DOG-028/Australia)

COMPILATIONS:

"Under the Boardwalk" on "Shake and Shout" Survival (Australia)

"Kill City" on "Hard to Beat: An Australian Tribute to the Stooges," 1988 AuGoGo (ANDA70/Australia)

HITMEN, with Chris Masuak, Warwick Gilbert (up to first LP only)

Hitmen LP July 1981 (WEA600097/Australia)

Track listing: Big Love/I Want You/I Don't Mind/Death Grip/Corridors of Power/Oh No/Don't Hit Girls/Mercenary Calling/In Your Eyes/I Stand Alone

"Everybody Knows (I Don't Like Love)"/"Dancin' Time" April 1982, RCA (RCA 103982/Australia)

It Is What It Is LP November 1982 (RCA VPL1-0403/Australia)

Track Listing: Pay Up Or Shut Up/Bwana Devil/Do Rin No Sho/Rocket On The Elevator Up/15 Hours/Wrath of God/It Is What It Is/No Clue/I'd Like To Kiss You/When The Idol Sings/Shadow Realm/When Worlds Collide

"Bwana Devil"/"I Didn't Want To Love You" November 1982 (RCA 104097/Australia)

Tora Tora Tora DTK LP November 1984 (ABC L38240/Australia)

Track listing: Rock n' Roll Soldiers/Bwana Devil/Didn't Tell The Man/Shake Some Action/It's So Hard/Everybody Knows (I Don't Like Love)/I Want You/Oh No/15 Hours/California Sun/I Don't Mind/Solid As A Rock

'78-'82 LP 1988 Survival Records (SRLP04/Australia)

Track listing: Big Love/I Want You/I Don't Mind/Death Grip/Corridors



of Power/I Am The Man/Rock n' Roll Soldiers/Oh No/Don't Hit Girls/Mercenary Calling/In Your Eyes/I Stand Alone/Didn't Tell The Man/Tell-Tale Heart

"Gonna Be Late" 7-inch flexi-disc (Free with "From The Vault" magazine Nos. 1 & 2)

U.E.L.A. 12-single, 1989, Survival Records/Australia

Moronic Inferno LP/CD, 1991, Zeus Records/Australia (Deniz Tek plays on this CD)

COMPILATIONS:

"It Is What It Is" is on "The AMCO Album" (YPRX2067/Australia)

"I Want You" is on "Squeezed Out" Australia

"I Don't Mind" is on "Chosen Few" Ktel (TA266/Australia)

CHRIS BOY KING (MASUAK) AND THE KAMLOOPS SWING Klondike 12-inch record, 1987, Rattlesnake Records/Australia

COMPILATIONS:
"It's Christmas Time Again" is on "Rockin' Bethlehem," 1987, Timberridge Records (SAW25/Australia)

JUKE SAVAGES, including Chris Masuak and Deniz Tek

Juke Savages CD 1992 Phantom Records/Australia

Chris Masuak also was in the Screaming Tribesmen, playing on "Date With A Vampire," "Top Of The Town," "I've Got A Feeling" and "Bones and Flowers." Also was briefly in the Surfin'Caesars



A PUNKS' GUIDE TO STEREO.

Listen, what you have may be trendy because it's so decadently old but after all you inherited it from your little sister who played Kiss on it all last year and it's shot.

So wise up. There are ways to get good sound that don't cost a whole lot. Or if your gonna steal stuff at least know what to look for.

Besides, if you're into collectors singles (and what New Wave picture jacket single isn't?) you don't want little curls of vinyl to fly up every time you put the ten pound antique sapphire simulated Pay-

less stylus down on your precious platter.

Get a BIC 920 turntable for about \$90 bucks with a cheapo magnetic cartridge. About six different stereo chains carry these things in any town. They have all sorts of nifties like belt drive and anti-



skate and cueing and an auto changer feature that lets you stack six records for a sock hop one minute and play discriminating manual-single play audiophile the next moment.



The ALAN MILMAN SECT



The Alan Milman Sect may not be a household name to a lot of people, but that doesn't negate their contribution to punk rock history: as the creators of the infamous "Stitches In My Head/I Wanna Kill Somebody." In fact, the song remained buried in obscurity, until it was re-issued by Bag Of Hammers records in 1992, prompted somewhat by Urge Overkill's then recent cover of said tune. Urge Overkill's Nash Kato had heard the song when a friend made him a cassette compilation of '77 punk stuff. Urge loved it so much that they covered it on their 1992 *Stull* EP.

The Alan Milman Sect's story begins in 1977 with two nice Jewish boys from Long Island. 24-year-old Alan Milman (a singer) and 21-year-old Doug Khazzam (a guitarist). Doug had been taught bass by Tim Bogart of Vanilla Fudge fame. Alan had been influenced by early black R&B music, doo wop, rockabilly, '60s garage rock, '70s glam rock, and most importantly of all, the Stooges. "The Stooges were the whole reason I started doing music," says Milman. "Originally it was, you know, the Stones and the Who, but it was the Stooges that got me off my butt and doing it. I saw the extremes that they went to, the boundaries being broken down." Milman had seen the Stooges on the infamous ABC TV show *Midsummer Rock* that showed a song and a half of Stooges live in concert, including Iggy smearing himself with peanut butter. In 1973/74, Milman and Khazzam would get to see the Stooges many times during the *Raw Power* tour. "That was the signal," says Milman. "The beginning of what would be labeled punk rock later. They didn't have a name for it then, there was no frame of reference."

Alan and Doug decided to get a band together in the summer of 1977 to play this kind of stripped-down, raw, energetic music. They went through a succession of drummers and bassists for live gigs, and in the studio Doug played the guitar and bass and various drummers, like the mysterious Domenic Diamond, filled the percussion chair. On some of the band's first four-track demos, Rikki Silverman also plays guitar. One of band's other drummers "Was from Jericho, and he looked like Jethro from the Beverly Hillbillies," says Milman. "Robert Wise also played drums for us, and we had a bass player once named Billy Bass." The band existed primarily around the songwriting partnership of Milman and Khazzam, with help from friends who became "auxiliary members."

In October of 1977, the Alan Milman Sect released their one and only seven-inch on Britz records. The A-side contained what was to be the first punk Christmas novelty tune (written by Jewish boys!), "Punk Rock Christmas," "Stitches In My head/I Wanna Kill Somebody," while the B-side paired the group up with 12-year-old Larry Teich on "Teen Tour." Larry was the son of Alan's dad's stockbroker's secretary, a classical pianist who had played at Carnegie Hall and decided he wanted to make a "punk rock record." It is, however, "Stitches" which is the record's stellar track, with its screamed vocals and crazed guitar playing. The song was actually the first punk song written and released

about the dreaded Son Of Sam. "It emerged out of a folk song," says Milman. "I had a friend who was a headshop supplier and as he was making his rounds, we'd pull out an acoustic guitar and sing about the Son Of Sam. As more murders occurred, we'd add more verses to the song like you do with a traditional folk song. We'd sing it in parks, and people found it really disturbing." Eventually, the song evolved into "Stitches In My head/I Wanna Kill Somebody." The reason for the title is that the song is actually a medley, albeit a short one, of two songs, influenced somewhat by the Lettermen's "Can't Take My Eyes Off You/Going Out Of My Head." The first single received positive reviews from underground mags like *Bomp!* and *Zig Zag*.

The Alan Milman Sect played gigs at local places like CBGB's and Max's Kansas City during 1977-78, as well as playing some shows on the West Coast, including the Mabuhay Gardens in San Francisco. In 1978, their second seven-inch came out under the name Man-Ka-Zam, also released by Britz. It had four songs on it, including "Surf Rhapsody," "Love With Machinery," "Spankathon," and "Happy World." By the end of 1979, the Alan Milman Sect was essentially kaput. Doug continued to perform under then name Buddy Love, with the songwriting and production team of Milman-Khazzam. Buddy Love released a single in 1980 on their own label, and a track featuring Milman appears on the CD compilation *Yellow Pills*. Later on, Alan fronted a more retro style garage band that started out as the Greefs, then became the Mod Shades, and finally ended as Duck and the Ponds. They released an LP on the U.K label Ace records in 1982, and Milman describes it as "pretty vicious garage." Milman also worked with Laine Steinberg, then of the Wind, and who is now doing Noel Coward's Ghost. In 1992, Milman met Mosh Weinberg, a student at a New York college, while Alan was working at the Psychedelic Solution gallery. The two of them decided to open up a record/CD store, and picked Mosh's hometown of Seattle. Their store, Bedazzled, reflects Alan and Mosh's tastes in music. While focusing mostly on CDs, they carry a wide section of '60s punk and psychedelia, '70s punk, and other underground sounds. Recently, they've branched out into releasing local bands they like, such as Iodine and Sadhappy, on the BCD label. Milman has also worked with local surf meisters the Boss Martians, and produced their debut single, "On The Rocks," in 1992. That same year, Jimmy Stapleton asked if he could reissue the "Stitches" EP on his Bag Of Hammers label. The seven-inch reissue was so popular that Milman has now compiled a CD of all the Alan Milman Sect material, including the "Stitches" EP, the Man-Ka-Zam EP, live material, and early four-track demos. Of course, this is on the BCD label. Milman still performs occasionally, guesting with people like Jim Basnight, and he has worked recently with veteran sixties folkie P.F. Sloan. When in town, please visit him at Bedazzled, located at 101 Cherry Street, in lovely Pioneer Square, just south of downtown Seattle.



The Story Of EATER

When punk rock hit Britain in 1976, surely no one expected one of its best exponents to be a band made up of 15-year-old brats. Eater only lasted a couple of years, but they recorded and released some classic British punk 45s and an LP full of snotty, obnoxious punk that has made them cult heroes to the new generation of punk rockers.

"Eater had existed in Brian's and my heads for a couple of years when we used to daydream about being in band," says ex-lead singer Andy Radwan (nee Blade). Both Andy and guitarist Brian Chevette were 15 when Eater formed. They named themselves Eater after a line in song by T. Rex, "Tyrannosaurs Rex, the eater of cars," and told girls in their school that they had a band. They were introduced to 13-year-old drummer Dee Generate through mutual friend Rat Scabies of the Damned.

"The Damned helped us a hell of a lot in the early days, they all became good mates, we were like mascots to a lot of the other bands because our age was so non-threatening." When Ian Woodcock joined a little later, he was the "old man" of the band at 18. "We put an ad in for a bass player in *Melody Maker*. Out of that ad we not only got a good bass player but a record deal. Dave Goodman was forming a label with John Rotten and saw the word 'punk' in our ad, and so called us up and asked to see us play. Boy, was life easy then. Rotten got pissed off with Goodman's long hair and left the project to Dave. It was gonna be called Rotten Records, but it became The Label," Andy recounts. "The label was a mistake in as much as they weren't experienced enough to handle the success we were having as we were too naive and immature to have been involved in business of any sort. Everyone was behaving like headless chickens!"

Eater played their debut gig in September 1976 with the Buzzcocks in Manchester, and soon they were garnering more attention and gigs in the London area. The band appeared in *The Punk Rock Movie*, a film made by Don Letts. "We were in *The Punk Rock Movie* because Don Letts was the DJ at the Roxy and he dug Eater a lot," says Andy. "All we knew was that he was filming his fave bands for home viewing! Our first experiences of really getting high on weed were through Don Letts and Johnny Rotten."

With Dave Goodman producing, the band recorded the single "Outside View," backed with "You." Released in March 1977, "Outside View" is a punk classic in every sense, with its unintelligible cockney vocals and buzzsaw guitar. They quickly followed up with another brilliant single, "Thinkin' of the USA," which was backed with "Space Dreamin'" and "Michael's Monetary System." As well, they appeared on the *Live at the Roxy* compilation with live versions of "Don't Need It" and "15" (their version of Alice Cooper's "18."). A few months later, Dee Generate left, his replacement being the slightly more talented, and older Phil Rowland.

"Phil replaced Dee in late '77 because Dee and Ian were always getting into fights about things, plus the general feeling was that he was too big headed and was starting to get into drugs to the detriment of playing drums," Andy says. Dee's last appearance with the group was the "Lock It Up" single, an accelerating punk number backed with a cover of T. Rex's "Jeepster."

In late 1977, Eater recorded and released their debut full-length, entitled simply *The Album*. Besides re-recorded versions of earlier singles like "Outside View," the album also contained blazing punk originals like "Public Toys" and "Room For One." They also paid homage to their heroes with covers of "Waiting For My Man" (Velvet Underground), "Queen Bitch" (David Bowie) and a studio version of "15," all played at lightening fast speed. Again, Goodman's production perfectly captures the youthful energy and pissed-off attitude of Eater. "All those bands, Cooper, T. Rex, Bowie we loved them and grew up on all of that, and it made our lives worth living," says Andy.

After the LP, Eater released the *Get Your Ya-Ya's Out* live EP, the title being a parody of the Rolling Stones' *Get Your Ya-Ya's Out*



Eater, 1976: (l to r) Brian Chevette, Ian Woodcock, Dee Generate, Andy Blade.

live album from 1970. On it, Eater recap two previous studio singles, while two of the numbers were exclusive to the EP.

The next Eater member to leave was Brian Chevette. "Brian quit because he was pissed off over management, and the way Ian was trying to take over musically," Andy says. In came new guitarist Gary Steadman, and another seven-inch was released, "Reach For The Sky" backed with "What She Wants She Needs." By this time, the sound of the band was wavering. "Reach" is more pub-rock sounding, while "What" has some of the energy of their earlier stuff, although neither is quite up to previous standards. The end was nigh, however for Eater, as Andy recalls: "I left a long time later, after Brian quit. It didn't feel like the original inspiration was there any more, Ian was turning us into an R & B band and I despised him for that, so did Brian. Phil was okay, but also a bit of a 'muso' — a boring musician who reads and enthuses about such things as 'chord progressions' and the like — which explains why the earlier stuff was more raw." Why did Eater finally break up? "We finally broke up coz I was being threatened by Ian to turn up to rehearsals or 'have my legs broken' (we despised each other by now)," says Andy. "And we were getting screwed by our label, which we were tied up with for a fucking million years!"

So, by late 1979, Eater were finished. Andy got together with ex-Damned guitarist Brian James in 1980 to record a solo effort, which was not released until 1985, when Deleorean records included it as a freebie single with their *History of Eater, Volume One* LP, although the single was credited to Eater. "The free single with *History of...* was indeed an Andy Blade solo thing, with Brian James on guitar, backing vox, bass and producing," says Andy. "It was never properly released. The tapes were stolen and ended up on that album for which I was never paid. No fucking way would I let 'em release a volume two! But all that would have been on it was on 'Compleat Eater' anyway." The Blade solo single that did come out in 1980 was a result of Andy teaming up with Billy Duffy (soon to join the Cult) and Greg Van Cook of the Electric Chairs for a single on the S.M.S. label called "Break Away News."

"There was other stuff recorded, but it will never be released because of the poor quality of the tapes," says Andy. "It was good though, and included a couple more originals like 'Happy Hangman' and 'Glass Mountain,' plus a version of Alice Cooper's 'Caught in a Dream.'"

Andy also played with various people, such as the Waterboys, then he and Brian Chevette formed a band called 'Purple Heart', but, as Andy says 'We never played or recorded, just shagged girls!' Ian played bass as a session guy, and Phil went on to join Slaughter and the Dogs. Nowadays, Brian plays occasionally in a band called 'Top Beat Music' doing weird covers and Andy has just released an album called *From Planet Pop to the Mental Shop*. He's also just finished a novel called *The Smug Drugglers* (about a "misadventure across North Africa by three imbeciles") which will hopefully be released through Henry Rollins' company. Rollins is also planning on re-releasing all the Eater recordings stateside for his label 'Infinite Zero' and may well release Andy's album in the US. 'I've been writing short stories since before Eater, and have had a few published, including a short book on Mandala," says Andy. "But I also have a new single called 'Junkie Shooting Star,' which is peculiar pop with attitude. Very savory in an unsavory sort of way." Asked is there would ever be a chance of Eater reuniting. Andy is quick to answer 'There'll be no Eater reunion, but I'll definitely be working with Brian Chevette again soon. He's featured on the new album, singing & guitar. How can you have an Eater reunion? It'd be like having a glass of beer without any beer, if you get my meaning!"

Eater discography:

"Don't Need It" & "15" on *Live At The Roxy* compilation LP (Harvest/EMI SHSP-4069)

"Outside View"/"You" 7-inch single 1977 (the Label TLR-001)

"Thinking Of The USA" b/w "Space Dreaming" & "Michael's Monetary System" 7-inch single 1977 (TLR-003)

"Thinking Of The USA" on "The Punk Collection" LP 1977 (RCA PL-42339)

"Lock It Up"/"Jeepster" 7-inch and 12-inch single, 1978 (The Label TAR-004)

The Album LP, 1978

no track listing available - also released as a picture disc! (the Label TLR-001)

"Outside View," "Point Of View" & "Typewriter Babies" on *The Label* compilation LP 1978



(The Label TAR-002)

Get Your Yo Yo's Out 7-inch & 12-inch EP 1978

(The Label TAR-007)

Track listing: *Debutante's Ball/No More/Thinkin' of the USA/Holland* "What She Wants She Needs"/"Reach For The Sky" 7-inch single, 1978 (the Label TAR-009)

"Outside View" on *The Punk of '76* compilation LP 1981 (Abstract ABS-004)

The History of Eater, Vol.1 LP & 7-inch single* 1985

Track listing: *Outside View/You/Thinking of the USA/Space Dreaming/Public Toys/Room For One/Lock It Up/I Don't Need It/My Business/Waiting for the Man/Bedroom Fits/No Brains/Lyin' To Me Again/Death Awaits Me 'Round the Corner"* (Delorean EAT-1)

The Complete Eater CD 1993

Track listing: *You/Public Toys/Room For One/Lock It Up/Sweet Jane/Fifteen/I Don't Need It/Anne/Get Raped/Space Dreaming/Queen Bitch/My Business/Wailing for the Man/No More/No Brains/Love & Peace (H-bomb)/Outside View/Thinking of the USA/Michael's Monetary System/She's Wearing Green/Notebook/Jeepster/Debutante's Ball/Holland/What She Wants She Needs/Reach for the Sky/Point of View/Typewriter Babies* (Anagram CD PUNK 10)

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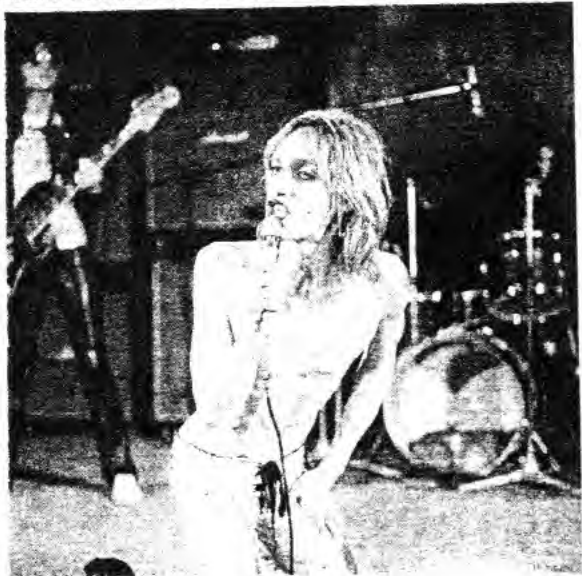
Dr. Stoogelove or How I Bought *Metallic K.O.* and Learned to Love

THE STOOGES

by Alan

The first Stooges record I ever bought was, I suppose, a bootleg. Skydog records, a French company notorious for releasing semi-legit records of rare material by bands like the Velvet Underground, the MC5 and the Flamin' Groovies released an LP called *Metallic K.O.* by Iggy and the Stooges in 1976, and licensed it to a strange Canadian company called Passport Imports for distribution in Canada. They also licensed Iggy Pop and James Williamson's post-Stooges project, *Kill City* from Bomp! One day, I was through the cut-out bins at a Music World in '81 or '82, and saw both these records for a mere \$3.99 each, so I snagged both of 'em up. I knew a little about Iggy Pop, and next to nothing about The Stooges. I listened to *Kill City* and found it mildly satisfying, while *Metallic K.O.* blew my mind. After hearing it, and playing it over and over, I searched out all the legit Stooges LPs and bought them, too. I started with *Raw Power*, which was by far the easiest to find. In fact, it was available in the "punk/new wave" section at the local Sam The Record Man store, as a CBS "budget price" release. I became a Stooges fanatic, and would delight in playing *Raw Power* for punk friends who hadn't heard it. I was astounded that this record, which had come out in 1973 was more intense even than the Sex Pistols. I soon discovered that the Stooges were a big influence on the Pistols, also. *Funhouse* came next. It took me a good couple of years to locate that one. When I did, though, it was an original with the ultra-cool gatefold jacket. I always thought this was a real bizarre album, as it had a sax player (Dave McKay) credited but you can't really hear him until towards the end of "TV Eye" on side two. After that, though, he's all over the place. Later on, I would make the even stranger connection that this LP was produced by Don Gallucci, formerly of Don and the Goodtimes! Since I was already becoming a huge Velvet Underground fan, it would have seemed natural to have sought out a copy of the first Stooges album because it was produced by John Cale. Unfortunately, a copy of this was nowhere to be found for many a year, and I had to settle with other people's covers of "I Wanna Be Your Dog" until my drum teacher gave me a copy that he didn't want anymore! I suppose it was only a matter of time before I would take the next logical step into the world of "Stoogemania": seeking out, and collecting, rarities by the band. While I haven't found them all, I've found enough to warrant this descriptive piece on them.

The *I'm Sick Of You* LP (Line/Germany) may not be a bootleg, but I'm not sure how legit it was, either. All of the songs had appeared previously on three different Bomp! seven-inchers, two credited to Iggy & the Stooges ("I'm Sick Of You" and "I Got A Right") and the other credited to Iggy Pop and James Williamson, and culled from sessions the two of them after the Stooges finally dissolved for good in late 1974 ("Jesus Loves The Stooges"). Initial copies of the LP came out on white vinyl too. Some of the material is culled from sessions done prior to *Raw*



Power by the four-piece Pop/Williamson/Asheton Bros. line-up (despite the liner notes' claim that they were done after *Raw Power*), and the results were pretty intense. The Stooges lost bassist Dave Alexander after the release of *Funhouse* (Alexander would later die in '75, after a long battle with alcoholism). The band toyed with the idea of not just replacing him, but adding a second guitarist in the process. In came former roadies Bill Cheatham on guitar and Zeke Zettner on bass (both had played in Scott Asheton's sideproject Rock Action). Cheatham left after six gigs, but Zettner stayed until 1971, when he was replaced by Jimmy Recca. Zettner died in 1975 from a drug overdose. McKay also left the group in late 1970. Soon afterwards, James Williamson was brought in on second guitar. This line-up of the band only played a few gigs, although one of the shows is apparently documented on a very lo-fi bootleg called *1971 Live*. Not long afterwards, the Stooges broke up for the first time. A few months later, after meeting David Bowie, and accepting an offer to sign with Bowie's Mainman management, Pop and Williamson went to England, where they attempted to reform the Stooges. After numerous tryouts for a new rhythm section, Iggy ended up calling Ron and asking if he'd consider playing bass, and if Scott could play drums. This line-up of the band recorded some demos in 1971/72, four of which appear on the *I'm Sick Of You* LP. There are incredible songs like "I Got A Right" and "Gimme Some Skin" that sound like hardcore punk, both musically and speedwise, before there was such a thing. "Tight Pants" is an early version of "Shake Appeal" (from *Raw Power*) rewritten, while "Scene of the Crime" is cool proto-punk stuff. Of course, the title track kicks butt, too! There are different versions or mixes of "Johanna" and "Consolation Prizes" (both of which would turn up on *Kill City*), which fare better in their rougher incarnations. Lastly, "Jesus Loves The Stooges" is a weird bluesy sort of thing.

The *Live at the Whisky A Go-Go* (Revenge/France) was recorded September 9, 1973. The record showcases the post-*Raw Power* five-piece line-up: Iggy on vocals and crowd baiting, James Williamson on guitar, Ron Asheton on bass, Scott Asheton on drums, and Scott Thurston on keyboards and harmonica. Scott had been added to the band to fill out the sound in mid-'73, after *Raw Power* was released.

The sound quality is raw, but energetic. In fact, it's dead-on serious when they rip through "Raw Power," "Head On," "Search & Destroy" and "I Need Somebody," which is particularly intense. Side two's "New Orleans" is actually "Heavy Liquid," and "She Creatures of Hollywood Hills" is an extended improv/jam thing. Apparently, an EP with the version of "She Creatures" off of this LP, plus a different version from somewhere else, and a version of "Open Up and Bleed" was also released, but I've never seen it.

Metallic K.O. (Skydog/France) was originally a single record, six song affair. The sound quality is crude, but the performance is wild. *Metallic K.O.* was recorded at the Michigan Palace in Detroit by a friend of Ron's, but there is a discrepancy about the exact date. On the LP, the liner notes date the show as happening on June 6, 1973, yet Ron Asheton claims it was actually February 9, 1974. Again, the five piece line-up is featured. The record featured deranged versions of "Raw Power" and "Gimme Danger," plus unreleased gems like "Head On," "Rich Bitch" and the insane "Cock in my Pocket." The ultimate killer though is their rendition on "Louie, Louie" with X-rated lyrics and Iggy getting a bottle thrown at his head towards the end of the song! The record's dubious nature began after James Williamson borrowed the master tapes from Ron for an engineering class project. Not too long after, the tapes came out as a bootleg live LP. Skydog also released the "I Got Nothing" b/w "Heavy Liquid" and "Gimme Danger" twelve-inch single in 1978 as well. Two of the songs didn't appear on *K.O.*, but would show up much later on this next release. In 1988, Skydog issued *Metallic 2XX.O.*, a double LP set with a gatefold cover, crazed photos on the sleeves, and even more music, purportedly from the same show. The added tracks included "Search & Destroy," "Heavy Liquid," "Open Up & Bleed," and "I Got Nothing." With slightly improved sound quality, this re-issue was even better than the original incarnation, and no Stoogesophile should be without one. It's been re-issued on CD, although the CD insert isn't nearly as classy as the double LP set.

My Girl Hates My Heroin was also released by Revenge records in 1989. It's got a great photo/collage cover, and recollections of The Stooges by Ron Asheton on the inner record sleeve. Dating from 1973, the tracks on this LP are from a series of famed "rehearsal sessions," wherein the band was trying out new songs as possible follow-ups to the *Raw Power* material. The sound is pretty rough, and real demented as they run through versions of "Cock in my Pocket," "Head On" and "Death Trip." On side two "Hey Baby" is new and the take of "Search & Destroy" is particularly insane. The recording is distorted and "crackly" in spots, but cool nonetheless. On certain songs, the guitar "zooms" from left to right channels, getting louder in the process. Weird! Again, this one features the five-piece *Metallic K.O.* line-up. The CD reissue of this features slightly beefed-up sound quality, and two extra tracks. One is an instrumental version of "Jesus Loves the Stooges," and the other is an unheard gem, the chaotic "How It Hurts." Same cool Ron Asheton liner notes with the CD package, too.

Death Trip (on Revenge, what else?) has a great color cover of Iggy on stage doing "the crab," and some more studio rehearsals are featured. "Head On" is the same version as on the *Heroin* LP, while "Raw Power" and "Death Trip," sound a little "cleaner" on this one. Then there's this crazy radio ad for a Stooges concert ("tickets available at



At the Whisky a Go Go in Hollywood, Sept. 1973



Orange Julius"), plus Iggy and James Williamson jamming together on covers of "I'm A Man" and "Ballad of Hollis Brown," the latter replete with a primitive beatbox sound.

Open Up And Bleed seems to be just the above EP with some extra stuff added, and totally different artwork. The added material includes a 13-minute live version of the title track that evolves into a free-form jam towards the end. What show it is culled from is a mystery, to me at least. Then there's a rough version of "Johanna," sans the saxophone that is all over the later version on both *I'm Sick Of You* and *Kill City*. Lastly, a couple more of those Pop and Williamson jam session tunes, covers of "Purple Haze" and "I'm So Glad" respectively.

The *Rubber Legs* LP was released on Fan Club, another French label. The LP says these songs are "studio rehearsals recorded in 1973 and 1974 between *Raw Power* and *Kill City*." There are slightly different takes of "Head On" (here titled "Head On Curb"), "Cock In My Pocket" and "Open Up And Bleed," where the keyboards are far more dominant. "Johanna" is the same version as the one on *Open Up And Bleed*, but "Rubber Legs" and "Cry For Me" were new to these ears. The CD version adds bonus live takes, recorded at the St. Louis American Theatre on September 18, 1973 (originally included as a bonus single with some copies of the LP), of "Gimme Danger" and "I Need Somebody" that really cook as well.

A recent Stooges release is the *Till The End of the Night* LP/CD, released on Revenge. This is yet another compilation of stuff from those mysterious 1973/74 "rehearsal tapes." There's an almost nine-minute version of "Johanna," studio run throughs of "She Creatures" and "Open Up & Bleed" and three previously unheard tracks. Both "Born in a Trailer" and "Til The End of the Night" are obviously "jams," as the band starts off slow and builds them into psychotic, full-fledged songs. Lastly, there's the completely over-the-top "Wet My Bed" recorded live at the Latin Casino in Baltimore.

The latest installment of Stooges rare material has been the Bomp! "Juana Chronicles" reissue series. The first release was a CD, and ten-inch version of "Kill City," with new artwork and, I would presume, digital remastering. More recently, we've been treated to a reissue of the *Jesus Loves The Stooges* EP, as a ten-inch vinyl release with a 3-D cover and a different mix of "Kill City" added, plus reissues of the *I'm Sick Of You* and *I Got A Right* singles. The most exciting release thus far is the long-promised *Rough Power* CD. This great release is made up of alternate, even rawer mixes of the *Raw Power* sessions, plus outtakes. I've had some of this stuff on tape, like the legendary radio broadcast of the rough mixes of the sessions that got played without CBS's consent over a local Detroit radio station, but it's great to have this in much better fidelity. Ron Asheton says that this is the first time these rare mixes have been taken from the original master tape, so the sound quality is about the best you can get. There are some good liner notes by Stooges historian Frank Meyer, and about seventy minutes of music. The first seven songs are from the Stooges' own 1972 mixes of *Raw Power*, and are incredibly crude and raw. As claimed by Asheton, the bass and drums are much more "up" in the mix, allowing to hear the truly inspired bass playing of Ron Asheton. The next seven tracks are from that WABX broadcast, complete with deejays Mark Parento and Dennis Frawley's stoned-out comments. Quite a few of

these tunes are radically different. "Search & Destroy," for instance, has a chorus of "Hey! Hey!" added, and many of the tunes feature backing vocals (some obviously by David Bowie!) and extra or different guitar parts altogether. There's even a later run-through of "Not Right," introduced by some mysterious woman. The last three songs are still more "alternate" mixes, and these are almost "pop" in sound. While there is duplication of songs ("Search & Destroy" appears three times!), it is utterly fascinating to hear these radically different mixes. The accompanying ten-inch release features two songs from the CD, plus an additional two different mixes not on the CD.

In the future, Bomp! promises more rare Stooges material. Hopefully, we'll see them issue legitimately some of those allusive Euroboots featuring rough mixes of first LP and *Funhouse* material, as well as the multitude of unreleased and rehearsal session stuff we've been treated to thus far.

Other Stooges boots:

Live 1971 (Starfighter, 1988) - documents dual Ron Asheton/James Williamson dual guitar lineup.

Raw Stooges, Vol. One (Electric, 1988) - original rough mixes of 1st LP.

Raw Stooges, Vol. Two (Electric, 1988) - original *Funhouse* rough mixes.

Search & Destroy: Raw Mixes, Vol. Three (Curtis, 1989) - rough mixes of *Raw Power* sessions and infamous radio broadcast.

Pure Lust EP (Revenge, 1987) - studio outtakes and rehearsals

Raw Power EP (Revenge, 1987) - studio outtakes and rehearsals

Gimme Danger EP (Revenge, 1987) - studio outtakes and rehearsals

She Creatures of the Hollywood Hills EP (Revenge, 1988) - studio outtakes and rehearsals

What You Gonna Do EP (Revenge, 1988) - studio outtakes and rehearsals

The Stooges EP Box Set (Revenge, 1989) - features all five of the above EPs in one box set.



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#22 WILL BE OUT SPRING

Seattle

SCENE

found

DEAD

This brief introduction to the Seattle music scene of the late '70s and early '80s barely scratches the surface of a city completely different from the post-Nirvana Seattle of the 1990s. We are grateful to Michael Campbell and Art Chantry for the photos and posters we've used for this little retrospective, as well as to Jim Basnight and Criss Crass for some of the info. Read local writer Clark Humphrey's brand-new book "Loser: The Real Seattle Music Story" (Feral House Press, Portland) for the whole tale, and look for future issues of *Do The Pop* to feature lengthy, long-winded diatribes on many of these bands.

posters courtesy Art Chantry and Michael Campbell



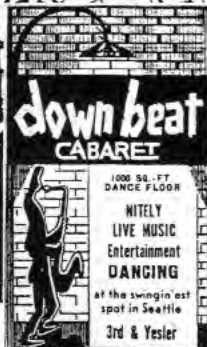
The Lewd in Seattle, 1977: Peter Tabor, guitar; Mike Van Dyke, bass; John Sticks, drums; and Satz, vocals.

Photo by Michael Campbell

By Lisa



The Lewd formed in Seattle in late 1976 as an outgrowth of the Knobs and other bands, and centered around J. Satz Baret. They released one single on Scratches records in 1979, with Satz vocals, Jon on drums, Blobbo on bass and Brad on guitar. They moved to San Francisco in 1980, and they appear on *SF Underground Vol. 2* (Subterranean Records) from that same year. Their new lineup featured Satz on vocals, Bob Clic on guitar, Alex Flex on drums and Olga DeVolga on bass. They also had one song on Target Video Vol. 4 compilation.



LIKE-IT'S THE MOST!

JAZZ

Pete's Poop-Deck
77 MAIN SEATTLE

the SONICS BOOM



1972

ALDER
SPRU
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CHARLES

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DEAN

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Ze (Fabulous) Whiz Kidz included such local luminaries as Tomata du Plenty, Cha Cha Samoa, Melba Toast, J. Satz Baret (nee Satin Sheets), Gorilla Rose and Rio de Janeiro. Not so much a band in the early days, Ze Whiz Kidz were a drag revue, early karaoke and a costume party all in one. Later, an actual musical band formed, using the same name. Songs included "Lay Me Down and Knock Me Up" and "A Fistful of Douche Bags." They gigged in the Exotic Paradise Room, located in the basement of the historic Smith Tower. Tomata, Melba and Rio went on to the Tupperwares, later the Screamers in L.A. On a totally unrelated note, Rio is the son of the owners of the now-defunct Doghouse Restaurant, a Seattle institution, and the present owner of the Puppy Club on Denny Way.

GREEN GUY PRESENTS:
ZANY ZE FABULOUS!
Whiz Kidz
FILMING!
FRI & SAT 19 20 MAY
FOOD! (OK TAIL) EXOTIC PARADE ROOM
SMITH TOWER - 2ND & YESLER
1973

Seattle's gay community played an important role in the punk scene. Members of Ze Whiz Kidz, who spawned many early punk groups, and later the Fags, were "out and proud" well ahead of their time. Wrex, now the Vogue on First and Virginia, was a gay leather bar before hosting punk acts.

OPENING NIGHT! MARCH 4



THE BIRD

107 SPRING ST., SEATTLE

The Bird, Seattle's first actual punk rock club, opened March 4, 1978 in the old J.L. Bird clothing company at First Avenue and Spring Street.



The Enemy, 1978. Photo by Michael Campbell

The Enemy, along with the Telepaths, Mental Mannequin and the Meyce, were among Seattle's premiere punk acts. Lead singer Suzanne Grant and guitarist Damon Titus were among 15 or so arrested at a police-induced melee at the Bird shortly before the club closed at its Spring Street site. Four punks were seriously beaten by the cops that night, with injuries including a broken wrist, a bashed-in forehead, numerous abrasions and fat lips.

Arrests of 15 at punk-rock club
complaints, probe of police

WE WERE POLICE VIRGINS!

THE BIRD IN EXILE PRESENTS

THE SCREAMERS
The **ENEMY**
TELEPATHS
2ND & WALL THE CARPENTERS' HALL
ONE NIGHT ONLY! MAY 19 9:00 PM
1978

the LEWD

8:00
all ages welcome! FEB. 18
one nite only
the WIPERS
the SUBHUMANS
the GOLDEN CROWN UP 1616 4th
ACROSS FROM BON MAR



COURSE

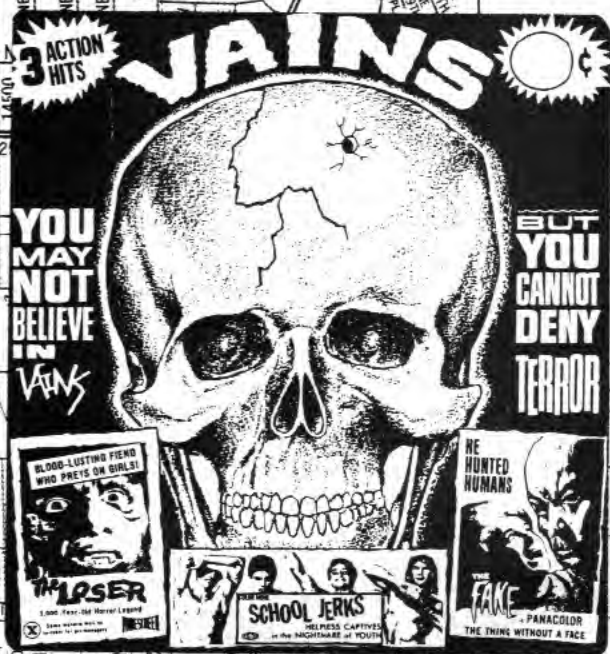
The Rosco Louie gallery, run by Larry Reid and Tracey Rowland, was a central venue for Seattle bands as well as visual artists, including the now-super-popular cartoonist Lynda Barry. In 1981, after two years, they closed the gallery and opened Graven Image, which ran for a year in 1983. Other downtown hotspots included the Showbox, Danceland USA, 84 Seneca, the Carpenter's Hall and Wrex.



The Moberlys in 1979.

Seattle's Jim Basnight has been one of the city's most enduring figures. He started playing while still at Roosevelt High School in the mid-'70s, when he was with Lova'Boy (not to be confused with the later, horrific Loverboy from Vancouver) and flipped a few wigs at the 1974 Roosevelt Talent Show. He later went onto the Velvet Underground-influenced Meyce, and eventually to the Moberlys, who fused power pop and punk rock. Jim now plays in the Rockinghams with former Vain Criss Crass and Jack Hanan, ex of the Feelings and the Cowboys. The Feelings included Gregory Ragan, who had been in the Niggers (or "the N-words," as they'd be referred to today). The Feelings, who performed Stooges covers and eventually evolved into the new-wavey Cowboys, had their inauspicious debut as the Feelies, before they realized there was another band with that name. As Ari Chantir so wisely put it in his excellent book *Instant Litter* (Real Comet Press, 1985), "Isolation was always a problem in Seattle." Later important acts included the Nathan Hale High School's Cheaters (including the Fastbacks/Young Fresh Fellows' Kurt Bloch and his brother Al), the

U-Men (featuring Gas Huffer guitarist Tom Price), the suburban-based Mr. Epp and the Calculations (with Mudhoney's Mark Arm) and the Heaters, another band who moved to L.A. and had to change their name. The Refuzors, who scored high on the "offensive" scale, are still kicking around with various line-ups revolving around Mike Refuzor.



The Vains, from Roosevelt High School, class of 1979, released one single on No Threes Records in 1980. They included Nico Teen, Alex Freeze, and the legendary guitarist/drummer Criss Crass, later of the Muffs, the Rockinghams, and many other bands.

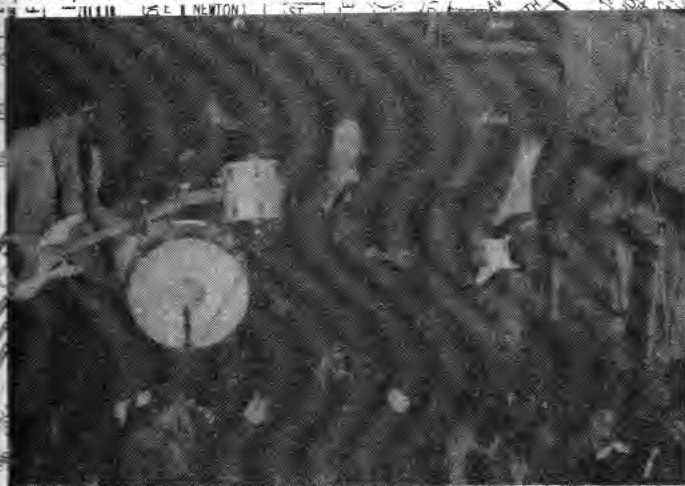


SCREAMERS

TELEPATHS + ENEMY
MAY 19 CARPENTERS HALL
9P.M. \$4.00 2512 2nd AVE.
Be on Lookout For Surprise 2nd Show!

Out-of-town bands had an obvious influence on the scene. Some, like the Lewd, Avengers and the Screammers, had a Seattle connection. Others, especially Vancouver's D.O.A. and Subhumans, San Francisco's Negative Trend and Dils, and Portland's Rats and Wipers, had an undeniable impact in Seattle.

The S'nots put out one single in 1979 on Edge City Records, and they featured Jeff Gossard, cousin of Stone Gossard of Pearl Jam. Please note, this will be the only reference to Pearl Jam you will ever see in this magazine. They were an outgrowth of Knobs, a Seattle proto-punk outfit.



The Knobs in Fremont, 1976. Photo by Michael Campbell

I.O.O.F Hall Punk Review

by Michael Campbell

(Editor's Note: Michael Campbell is the former stage manager for Ze (Fabulous) Whiz Kidz, as well as a photographer and writer. He is presently one of the directors of One Reel Productions, in addition to being an all-around nice guy who had generously intended to write a short piece for the magazine. But management of the dreaded Bumbershoot Arts Festival intervened, and his time was limited, so here, we present in its entirety, Michael's diatribe on show violence at Capitol Hill's Odd Fellows' Hall, from Twisted magazine, of which he was associate editor, in 1977.)

First off, you have to dodge the flying folding chairs, watch out for broken glass, and learn how to dodge empty Kentucky Fried Chicken snack plates. I go there for the violence — it's not severe and it is better than TV. Most of the physical and emotional violence is only simulated, and the people who go there aren't politically, socially or economically as bad off as their English counterparts.

But you want to know what the bands are like, right? Who knows, and who gives a shit? In this particular case, the bands and their music were the last thing to be concerned about. What you had were an audience of drunk or loaded bored people who made a lot of noise and racket, backed up by a band.

Love to all our fans —

The Trupperwares



At one time I was under the obviously wrong impression that the music was the part of this Punkette Revue that was supposed to be ugly but good.

The best Seattle shows I've seen to date have been small practice or preview sessions. The time I saw the Knobs at Shell Shock Studio and there again, the Lewd, I was really knocked out. The music was intense and the band didn't have enough room to try to do Iggy's routine of "Mutilation With No Blood." The vocalists had to sing and usually were close enough to read their lips if you were drowned out by the amp. In other words, the bands had to work out and put out. I haven't been lucky enough to have seen the S'nots or any other local band in such close confines where they didn't have to compete with the environment for attention.

I've seen several great starts both by individual vocalists and players. But you really never get to hear anything develop because the bands either fall apart or the sound equipment is so bad you can't really hear the music as the band intended it to sound. Oh, well, who really gives a shit? Excuse me while I go get my 2X4 and get ready for a party.

THE BIRD RETURNS

AUG 18

AUG 19



READYMADES

FRIDAY 9:00pm SATURDAY 9:00pm

ENEMY TELEPATHS

DOA SPECIAL ATTRACTION

THE BIRD 915 E. PINE

ROCK WITH THE REFUGERS

WITH VIOLENT WORLD

We Are What They Eat

7:00

Pugy Bo

21+ OVER-18 REQUIRED

1200 1ST AVE. SW. PIONEER SQUARE

ADRONA
JARK
ERSON ST

BLAINE
"The Bird" at the Odd Fellows' Hall, 1978

SATAN'S RATS

By Alan



I'd never heard of Satan's Rats until I got these three limited edition white vinyl seven-inch re-issue singles on the Overground label recently. The original versions of these singles were released on the DJM label between 1978-79, and the band appeared to hail from England. That's about all I know about them! The songs are written by band members, who seem to have included a Steve Eagles, a Roy Wilkes, and two other guys with the last names Rencher and Harrison. Besides their cool moniker, these Brits produced some great catchy and raw punk rock, with a good dose of offensiveness thrown in. The first single, "You Make Me Sick" backed with "Louise" was produced by veteran punk/hard rock producer Vic Maile (Vibrators, Damned, Motorhead, etc.). Both sides are hard-edged tunes, and the A-side has nasty lyrics and a classic Brit-punk feel, kind of like the Users, with that "1-2-1-2" tempo. The flip's "Louise" is a rockin', more garage-style "love" song.



The second 45 was "In My Love For You" backed with "Facade." Again, Satan's Rats come up with a couple more winners. This time the production is handled by Rikki Sylvain, and while it's not as intense or well produced as their first, this one is worth checking out nonetheless. "In My..." has a great riff and gets the blood pumping. "Facade" is an attempt to get a little "arty," with loads of echo on the vocals and that sort of "clanky" guitar chord structure that makes it sound a little like early Fall or Subway Sect stuff.

The last Satan's Rats single was "Year of the Rats" backed with "Louise." Once again the production chores go to Rikki Sylvain, and the results are perhaps the rawest material yet. "Year of the Rats" is sort of an attempt at a "theme song," and it's a full-force punker straight outta hell! The buzzsaw guitar will have you pogo-dancing around the room in no time! The B-side is another run through of "Louise," this time played a bit faster and looser than the first single's version. So who were these guys? Beats me, but you can bet that I'll be finding out more!



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WAYNE KRAMER



& THE MC5

Without a doubt, The MC5 are up there as THE proto-punk band of the late 1960s/early 1970s. They were instigators of HIGH ENERGY rock. The MC5 had its humble beginnings as an R&B-influenced garage band, and ended up as the band that changed the face of ROCK music forever. They certainly changed my concept of rock music. The first time I heard the MC5 was when I stumbled across a copy of *Kick Out The Jams* in a used record store. What I heard that night when I put *Jams* on the turntable made me an MC5 fan for life. Later on, I would track down their second and third records, *Back In The USA* and *High Time*.

All these LPs though, plus the few live tapes I managed to secure, became favorites of mine. Never once when I listened to those intense, energy-inducing records did I think I would one day be sitting two feet away from MC5 guitarist Wayne Kramer, interviewing him about the MC5. I'd decided to write about the MC5 for *Do The Pop*, mostly due to the recent resurgence of interest in the MC5's music, and the death of former MC5 guitarist Fred "Sonic" Smith. When the opportunity arose to interview Wayne Kramer in person, Lisa and I jumped at it. Brothers and sisters, I want to give you a testimonial... The MC5.

The MC5 began gathering steam as a performing unit in 1965. Fred "Sonic" Smith and Wayne Kramer had been jamming together on guitars since junior high, in 1962. Wayne convinced another pal, Michael Davis, to take up bass, even though he was actually a budding guitarist. Rob Tyner was added as lead singer, and Bob Gasper on drums. Shortly afterwards, Gasper was replaced by powerhouse drummer Dennis Thompson. With this strong line-up, the MC5 blasted out R & B favorites, as well as original compositions based on their increasing frustration with the world around them. Their first recorded output was a 1967 single on the local AMG label, cut in 1966 while the boys were still fledgling teens. "I Can Only Give You Everything" backed with "Just One Of The Guys," was a double-sided garage-rock classic, released in a limited run of 500 copies. The A-side finds them snarling their way through the Them/Troggs song, with guitars set firmly on "fuzz." The B-side is a great commentary by the band on the local yahoo jocks that put down the freaky MC5 guys. Strangely enough, the single was re-released in 1969, with a different mix of "I Can Only Give You Everything" and an unreleased song recorded in '66 called "I Just Don't Know" on the flipside. "I Just Don't Know" is heralded as "the first experimental use by the MC5 of feedback." At that time, the Motor City Five, as they were then referred to, had a strong lead/rhythm guitar line-up in Wayne Kramer and Fred Smith. Wayne ripped out fuzz-drenched leads over top of Fred's never-wavering rhythm parts, to maximum effect. It was a great debut, and soon it had garnered the group some attention and they were playing regular gigs around the Detroit area.

Do The Pop: When did you start playing guitar?

Wayne Kramer: I started playing guitar around age 10, which was right after the earth cooled.

DTP: Were you in any other bands before the MC5? I've heard about one called The Bounty Hunters?

WK: I was in some other bands before the Bounty Hunters, but when you're first starting to play, you never have a proper band. It's more like you and some kid with a snare drum. Or the kid that plays guitar that lives down the street. That's your first type of "band." There were a couple of bands that I played parties with, but the Bounty Hunters were a "real" band with three guitar players and a drummer.

DTP: Did you record anything?

WK: No, we just played in the garage and at parties and such.

DTP: How did you meet the rest of the people that would become the MC5?

WK: In the neighborhood.

DTP: Where did you grow up?

WK: In Lincoln Park, a blue collar suburb of Detroit. They call it "down river."

DTP: You all went to high school together?

WK: Yes, except for Dennis Thompson, he grew up in northwest Detroit. We met him after we had all left home and relocated to the Wayne State University area. That was the "beatnik" neighborhood, downtown Detroit, and we met Michael there. He was a WSU artschool dropout.

DTP: How old were you when the MC5 started?

WK: Well, Fred Smith and I started playing guitar together at age 13, and we started the 5 around age 16.

DTP: Wow!

WK: We were just out of high school, in the last year of high school when the band started playing live engagements around Detroit, and we started meeting people.

DTP: You look really young in this picture of the MC5 from 1965. You're all wearing suits and ties!

WK: Yeah, I hadn't even begun to comb my hair down. I still had my pompadour. I didn't like the "new" hairstyles, I was still holding onto the "Elvis look."

DTP: So, were you listening to a lot of R & B stuff when the MC5 started?

WK: In the beginning we listened to Chuck Berry and Little Richard. Both of them had an energy to them. There was an attraction to this "high energy" music, and there was a manic intensity to it. Like breathing, or drinking water, I needed that energy. That attraction evolved through the course of the MC5 as we discovered the music of James Brown, and we found it in Motown. Especially in the Motown rhythm section. We heard it in the music of The Who and The Rolling Stones, and in the music of the free jazz movement in the late '60s, through the music of Ornette Coleman, John Coltrane and, of course, the wondrous Sun Ra. All this music had the same "high energy" level. There was a degree of commitment by all of these musicians to go beyond traditional musical forms.

DTP: With the first single, "I Can Only Give You Everything," you're doing basic garage-style rock, but by the time of "Looking At You," you're experimenting with feedback. There's a story of how an engineer got



The suit and tie days, 1966



Sporting "the Mod look," 1967

freaked out over your use of feedback on an aborted attempt to record "Looking At You"?

WK: Well, I'd set my amp up to sound the way I wanted, because I don't just play the guitar, I play the amp, too. That sound I got, it had an energy to it. The engineer would say "Turn it down, it's too distorted."

DTP: Did you and Fred always play the different guitars. Fred is later credited as "Mosrite guitar" and you as "Fender guitar." You were the lead and he was the rhythm guitar at first?

WK: In the beginning.

DTP: And then you sort of switched to that "dual lead" sound?

WK: He discovered how to play solos, and I really started to pay attention to his skill at rhythm guitar. Pretty soon we kind of melded into one guitar player. We'd both play rhythm and solos simultaneously. You know, I haven't really heard any two-guitar combinations that did that the way we did it. Usually one person plays lead, and the other rhythm. There aren't that many real rhythm guitar players anymore, it was a real special thing.

DTP: It was almost like double-tracking the guitars in a live setting.

WK: We worked on it a lot, we played guitar together for a long, long time and went through a lot together. As much of it was instinctive, there were parts we had to work out.

DTP: Now, when you say you "played the amp," were you using any effects pedal at this point?

WK: No, because there really weren't any yet. We were rehearsing one day in my mother's basement, and we took a break. So we went upstairs to eat sandwiches or something, and I'd leaned my guitar up against the amp, but forgot to turn it off. We were upstairs sitting around talking, and we started hearing this noise from the basement. Then we all realized that whatever was happening downstairs, this was the power that could control the universe. So, we were downstairs, and there's this guitar playing all by itself, going, "Uhhmmmmmm." There were jars of nails on the shelves, and the vibrations made them fall and break. So, then we knew we had power! At the same time, The Yardbirds were coming out and Jeff Beck was using feedback, and Pete Townsend was using it. It wasn't like the MC5 invented it, but we discovered it for ourselves. It certainly helped us take what we were doing and go beyond that.

The MC5 took this new knowledge, and began to experiment with what would get dubbed the "high energy" sound. The band met poet/jazz critic/political activist John Sinclair and a relationship was forged that resulted in him becoming their manager. After Sinclair began managing, and in many ways, guiding the band, the MC5's music began to take on a whole different feel, starting with their next single, "Looking At You." The MC5 had already made an abortive attempt to record the song with a less than enthusiastic engineer who stormed out of the control room when the band tried to capture their new found "feedback effects" on tape. Sinclair suggested they try again with a different engineer. The result was hailed as "the forerunner of that famous MC5 HIGH ENERGY sound." As the A-side rips out of your speakers like nothing before with its savage now-twin lead work of Wayne and Fred, Rob sings these intense lyrics: "When it happened something snapped inside/made me want to hide/all alone on my own..." Released on the A-Square label in 1968, it featured another great original, "Borderline" on the flipside. This release set the standard for MC5 music to come. Suddenly there were

less rules. They felt free. Songs that started as jams became more improvised as the MC5 began to absorb the influence of "free jazz" musicians such as Sun Ra and Pharoah Saunders. Live shows had them working up crunching, feedback filled versions of everything from the Troggs' "I Want You" to old blues standards like "I Believe To My Soul" and "I Put A Spell On You." The band had met John Sinclair, Minister of Information with the White Panther Party, newspaper columnist, jazz deejay, and self-made radical. Sinclair was not impressed with the MC5 at first, but as he grew to know and understand them more, he began to see the energy in their music. Sinclair was soon appointed manager, and he began setting up gigs for the band, many of which he recorded. A good document of the MC5 around this time is the 1994 Receiver CD entitled *Black To Comm*, which features liner notes by Sinclair, and is material culled from his personal collection of live tapes. All the material on this on this one was recorded during live performances at the Sturgis Armory in Western Michigan, in 1968, before the *Kick Out the Jams* album. The sound quality is quite good, and the band is captured at it's HIGH ENERGY best. Of course, "Kick Out The Jams" is featured, and "Come Together" is introduced as a "new song written by Fred Smith." They also do an insane James Brown Medley consisting of "Cold Sweat," "I Can't Stand Myself" and "There Was A Time." This CD also features "Lower Egypt," their interpretation of Pharoah Saunders' "Upper & Lower Egypt," with lyrics added (the Stooges also utilized the riff from song for their "Little Doll"). This CD of the MC5 in their early days shows just how much free jazz, blues and soul music was an inspiration for them. Another fair document of the MC5 during this time can be found on the 1988 pink vinyl bootleg LP *Live Detroit 1968/69*. Actually, only three of the songs were recorded in Detroit, the rest being from either German TV (the MC5 had the chance to play in Germany and the U.K. in 1969), or a New York City show. The sound quality is pretty rough, but there is an absolutely insane version of "Kick Out The Jams" on this that goes off into some sort of free-form freak-out that has to be heard! The MC5 performed many an extended improvised song that hit the twenty minute mark. "Ice Pick Slim," for example was an often played and well-rehearsed song featuring Rob Tyner on flute, the trading off of guitar licks and solos between Fred and Wayne, even a drum solo! Others songs were made up on the spot as a simple blues jam wherein the band would start with the basic riff, and "go out" from there. Songs like "Black To Comm" (named after the connections between a guitar and the amplifier) were never played the same way twice, if at all. Live recordings of "Black To Comm," for instance, show that it could last anywhere between six and thirteen minutes in length. The *Powertrip* CD on Alive, (a subsidiary of Bomp!) is culled from John Sinclair's collection of tapes, it includes a great selection of this type of experimental studio, and live material. Everything from an instrumental early take of "Looking At You" to extended jams like "I'm



Mad Like Eldridge Cleaver" (which features Sinclair on some of the worst-sounding saxophone ever!) to sonic covers of "I Put A Spell On You" are featured. This CD kicks butt, and is also the first authorized release of any of this stuff, some of which has been floating around on lo-fi tapes for years. Alive! also issued this as a limited edition ten-inch with three songs not on the CD, and three taken from the CD version. Shortly after the release of the CD, Bomp! also put a ten-inch vinyl release featuring the aforementioned "Ice Pick Slim."

The MC5 also played during the 1968 Democratic National Convention in Chicago (August 25-30), as part of the "Youth International Festival of Life" concerts in Lincoln Park, along with the Fugs and Country Joe. The band rented a flatbed truck and decided to play outside the convention. At some point, during "Black To Comm," there was an altercation between a biker and a policeman, erupting into a full-scale riot, culminating in the arrest of Fred Smith and John Sinclair. This was only one of a series of brushes with the law the MC5 would have. All the members of the MC5 had been arrested previously on July 26 and charged with disturbing the peace at a free concert they'd played in West Park.



By 1968, the MC5 are lookin' baaadd!

DTP: At what point did you meet up with John Sinclair?

WK: We met John in 1967, after we had all moved to downtown Detroit. We had heard about The Artists' Workshop, which was a collection of jazz musicians, poets, sculptures, painters, that sort of thing. It was led by this incredibly charismatic person named John Sinclair, and John had just finished serving six months for possession of marijuana, so the Artists' Workshop had a giant celebration, and the MC5 played. We had to wait all day for the beatniks to finish what they were doing, poetry readings and all that. Finally, we set up these big Vox amps we had and we played at four in the morning. Then John sent his wife down to pull the plug on us. So, that's how we met Sinclair. Right after that, he had written — he had a column in a local newspaper called *The Ann Arbor Sun* — about the Jive Rock 'n' Rollers and how they needed to listen to John Coltrane and Sun Ra. So, we wrote him and said, "Hey, we already listen to that stuff. We know what you're talking about." So, that opened up a dialogue, and we figured, "We're artists, we live in the neighborhood, and we need a place to rehearse." We asked if we could fit in there, and that was the beginning of our relationship with John Sinclair.

DTP: Was he your manager at this point?

WK: Well, he evolved into that, because he was older than all of us. He was the first person who could articulate how we felt. All we knew was that the world was fucked up, the war was fucked up, the city was fucked up, life's fucked up! John could articulate for us and put it into some kind of intellectual perspective that we could understand. We had tried to have managers before, but they were all music biz slimeballs and, of course, that would never have worked with the MC5. John was the first guy that we trusted.

DTP: Did John improve what you were already doing then?

WK: Uh-huh.

DTP: You'd already released the first two AMG singles by then, right?

WK: Yes. The first single we did with John was "Looking At You."

DTP: That's the beginning of the whole "High Energy" sound, experimenting with feedback and such?

WK: That was the first time we thought the engineer had heard what we were trying to do, and was sympathetic and empathetic, and tried to help us get "the sound." He was a wonderful cat named Danny Dallas.

DTP: The sound on that single is so "sonic."

WK: Yes, it's very strong!

DTP: There must've been a real mutual attraction between the MC5 and Sinclair, but did he "push" the left-wing political ideals on you?

WK: He didn't push anything on us, we came up with those ideas together. We were tools of nobody's revolution. We were right there, we had both feet in it, right from the beginning. The thing that's lost sometimes is that everything was done with a great deal of humor.

DTP: There must've been, with a slogan like "Dope, Rock 'n' Roll, and Fucking in the Streets!"

WK: Our three-point program!

DTP: It wasn't so much overtly political, but rather a revolution in music?

WK: And lifestyle.

DTP: Who came up with the idea to drape American flags over the amps?

WK: I thought it created a kind of "festival" air to the concerts. We didn't have just American flags, either. I had a Jolly Roger, Tulip flags, the White Panther banner. Fred Smith used to put up a fucking Confederate flag! It was all just images. We were really trying to base our performances on this idea of what a real show was all about. It had more to do with James Brown, and the energy. The Who were a real rock band with a show, and we were trying to synthesize everything we saw that was real dynamic. That was the shit that turned us on.

DTP: Did you guys feel a kinship with other bands from Detroit that were doing the same sort of things as you, like the Stooges?

WK: Yeah, they were our brothers.

DTP: What about the Alice Cooper band?

WK: They kind of came along a little later, and they never really had the power and energy thing that the MC5 and the Stooges had.

DTP: They were a little more "show biz" than you, going for that "glam rock" thing.

WK: They were a good band, though. They were entertaining, and they did a good show. You gotta remember that Detroit audiences were really custom built. We had "groomed" the Detroit sound, not just the MC5. I mean this is the home of Motown, and there were, at its peak, hundreds of bands in the area, all trying to carve out their style, trying to be a little sharper. So, you really had to "produce."

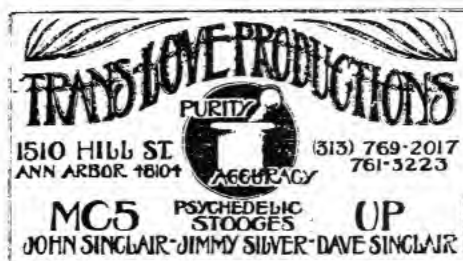
DTP: Some of those mid-to-late 60s Detroit bands, like the Unrelated Segments, Amboy Dukes and Bob Seger and the Last Heard, they were really pushing to get heavier and heavier.

WK: Oh, yeah!

DTP: The whole sound that came out of the city seemed to be the precursor to punk rock. Do you think this was because the city was so working class?

WK: Well, it was D.I.Y. If you were anything, you had to either be in California, New York, or Britain. To be from Detroit, this industrial town, it was like, "They don't make music in Detroit, they make cars." So, we had to invent it ourselves. Make our own statement, or own stand, which runs right through the entire punk ethic of "Do It Yourself" to this day. My attitude was "Fuck 'em, I'm gonna do this 'cause I need to do this!" Not because it's a trend, or because it's fashionable, but because you had to do this.

DTP: How did Fred get the nickname "sonic"?



WK: Gretsch made a guitar called a "Sonic Boom," that had a switch on it that was for the "sonic boom sound." We bought one, and it was a really gross looking guitar, so we took it home and it sounded pretty good. Later, Fred switched to the infamous Mosrite guitar, but he liked the name "sonic," and it stuck.

DTP: Who wrote the song, or came up with the slogan, "Kick Out The Jams?"

WK: Rob Tyner did. It was part of that "bandspeak" I was talking about. Bands used to come to Detroit, and we were the house band at the Grande Ballroom. We played two nights a week, two sets a night. They started bringing in bands from out of town, and they were always lame. So we'd say "Kick out the jams, or get off the stage!" You know, "get down or get out," because this was Detroit. "If you're not going to get up there and sweat, you might as well get out of here!" is what we'd say. One time Cream played and Fred was just wailing on 'em, hassling them while they were playing because they were so boring live. So, one day I was playing some chords in the kitchen, and Rob said "Wait a minute, play those chords again. I've got some lyrics for that!"

DTP: Was Rob your primary lyricist?

WK: In the beginning. He was slightly more prolific. I think Rob would write three or four songs, and I'd write one. By the time we got to *Back in the USA*, Fred had started getting into writing and by *High Time* he was really hitting his stride.

DTP: Rob was primarily a singer, right?

WK: Yes, but as you know, he also played flute and harmonica. He could also get around the bass a little bit, because he had played the cello. He also played the theremin.

DTP: Did you ever use the theremin on any recordings?

WK: Not on any of the records, but Rob had a theremin to use on stage. This electronics buddy of his built him one. It was real dramatic!

DTP: That must've been interesting on those free-form improv jams you guys did!

WK: Oh, yeah!

DTP: Rob had such a powerful, soulful voice. We were discussing the other day how he was a real strong vocalist.

WK: He was one of the best, he was super!



DTP: So, how did Tyner get that afro?

WK: In the beginning, everyone wanted to look like the Beatles, but Rob had this tight, kinky hair. He used to struggle to straighten it. One day, he'd just had enough, and this "natural look" was coming out, and one day he'd come over to my house and he'd cut his hair. He had this tight little afro, it was beautiful! So, we were like "Man, that's fucking great!" Then the more it started to grow, the bigger it got. This was the time of Eldridge Cleaver and Angela Davis, so Rob was the pioneer of the "white boy with afro" look, of which there were a few after: Handsome Dick Manitoba and Mick Farren for example.

DTP: And Mitch Mitchell of the Jimi Hendrix Experience!

WK: Oh, yeah! He had a great 'fro, didn't he?

DTP: So, was this a sort of "homage" to black folk?

WK: No, he just liked it. Nothing deeper than that!

DTP: How did you get involved with the White Panther Party?



WK: Well, the White Panthers, in that same sense of humor, kind of evolved out of the "MC5 Social & Athletic Club," which was our fan club. The MC5 were very much a product of its time, and we were plugged into the political consciousness in the air, so we just kind of adopted the Black Panther's credo. They were bad dudes, they were serious. We were bad dudes, we were serious. We tried to parallel what they did. They worked in their community, we worked in ours.

DTP: Were you doing benefits for food banks and such?

WK: Sure, any chance to play, really. That was our basic agenda, just to get up and play music.

DTP: Was Sinclair responsible for getting you signed to Elektra?

WK: No, although John was a major player in the business end of what we did. The band itself was so crazy that we couldn't even talk to people. We were so locked in our rhetoric, we had our own "Band speak," we were just "out there." John worked with Danny Fields, who came to see the MC5, and saw that this was an important rock band, and what was happening here on a regional basis could be converted into a national or international basis, with the right record company. So, we went back and talked to Jack Holtzman. Jack came and saw us, and then signed the MC5.

The MC5 were signed to Elektra at the same time as the Stooges, in New York on September 26, 1968. *Kick Out The Jams* was recorded over two nights, October 30-31 (Zenta New Year), at the Grande Ballroom in 1968, and released in January of 1969. The LP kicks off with a great "testimonial" by the bands M.C., Brother John "Jesse" Crawford III, who asks the crowd, "Are you gonna be part of the solution, or part of the problem?". Brother Crawford was fan of the band, and a deejay on WABX radio in Detroit, who hung around the Artists' Workshop, and approached the band about letting him introduce them. He became known as the band's "religious leader and spiritual advisor." This started a tradition, much in the style of the early James Brown shows, of having the band be introduced in a verbal style similar to the "bandspeak" the MC5 used. It's this powerful, and slightly humorous introduction that makes *Kick Out The Jams* such a great live LP. The band absolutely burns through the opening song, a cover of Ted Tyner's R&B classic "Rambling Rose," and then breaks into their theme song, "Kick Out The Jams." There are incendiary versions of songs like "Come Together," "Rocket Reducer No. 62," and "Borderline." The band also reworks some cover tunes: the Them/Troggs song "I Want You," a John Lee Hooker's "Motor City Is Burning," and Sun Ra's

"Starship," which becomes an extended freakout jam song. Initial versions of the LP had "Kick Out The Jams" introduced by Tyner with the infamous line "Kick out the jams, motherfuckers!" When Hudsons store owners complained, Elektra recalled the LP, pulled the offensive version off the LP and replaced it with the single version on which Tyner had overdubbed the words "brothers and sisters" over "motherfuckers." Elektra also reduced the LP from a gatefold sleeve design, with liner notes by Sinclair, to a regular jacket design, sans liner notes. The MC5 responded by taking out ads that exclaimed "Fuck Hudsons." Elektra responded by releasing the MC5 from their contract. Their relationship with Elektra had lasted all of six months.

DTP: Whose idea was it to do the first LP as a live album? Did you feel this was the best representation of the MC5?

WK: It was a mutual thing, but with the benefit of a few years of looking back, I can see that it was a real inexpensive way to make a record.

DTP: They did it over two nights, right?

WK: Yeah, and I didn't like 'em, either. I didn't think the band played all that well on those nights. They told us they were going to record some more, but they went ahead and put out the concerts that they had.

DTP: How soon did the shit hit the fan about the word "motherfucker?"

WK: The shit hit the fan right in the beginning. We told them not to put the album out until, the single was a hit, to hold the album back. When the single took off, they rushed the album out, and the parents started freaking out. Clerks in record stores were being arrested for selling it!

DTP: Did the record company make Rob go into the studio and dub "Brothers and sisters" over "motherfuckers?"

WK: No, we did that for the single version. We weren't stupid enough to think that "Kick out the Jams, Motherfucker" could be a hit single.

DTP: So did this get out of control, is that how you ended up getting dropped by Elektra?

WK: Well, after the big blow-up about "motherfucker," they put out a "clean" version of the LP, against our wishes, and took Sinclair's liner notes off. That was the "censored" version. We had an underground newspaper at that time, and there was a store, a huge chain that

MC5



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wouldn't sell the record called Hudson's. So, we said, "Let's put an ad in there that says, 'Fuck Hudson's.'" We sent Elektra the bill, because our contract said we had complete control over advertising. In our community, this is the way people talked. It was standard operating procedure. Elektra decided that this was "unprofessional," and released us from our contract.

DTP: Was this upsetting to the MC5?

WK: Sure, but Jerry Wexler jumped in immediately. Danny Fields and John Sinclair went over to Atlantic, and Jerry had the balls to say, "This is an important rock band, and we want this band on Atlantic Records."

The band had already worked up, and were performing new numbers like "The American Ruse," "The Human Being Lawnmower," "Teenage Lust" and "Tonight." Live tapes from this period show just how strong these songs were, even with the MC5 stripping the sound back to it's roots. The new songs were shorter, more concise, more straight forward Rock 'n' Roll. The *Looking At You* CD, released by Receiver in 1995, is a good example of this period of the MC5. There is no indication on the CD as to where this live material is from, but it would appear to have been recorded between the *Kick Out The Jams* and *Back In The USA* albums. The versions here of tunes that show up later on *Back In The USA* are much more HIGH ENERGY than their studio counterparts (more on that later), and the sound quality is pretty good. Some of the treats included a run-through of the old blues standard "Fire of Love" and a crazed "Black To Comm." They were also regularly performing covers of '50s tunes like "Back In The USA" by Chuck Berry and "Tutti Frutti" by Little Richard. In some ways, the MC5 had done a 180, going back to their garage band roots, while



Fred "Sonic" Smith



Rob Tyner

attempting to make these songs as raunchy as possible. "When we started playing in groups, we were 12 and 13 years old and at that age I think what we were interested in was screwing girls. We wanted to be rich," said Fred Smith in *Rolling Stone* number 110, about the return to shorter, less experimental songs. "There was one type of music - the type Chuck Berry played - and we wanted to play that because we loved it." The MC5 were already in the studio with producer/engineer Bruce Botnick, preparing to follow up the *Kick Out The Jams* LP, but when Elektra dropped the MC5, the sessions were abandoned. All efforts to turn up the tapes from these sessions has remained fruitless. Former Elektra associate Danny Fields hooked Sinclair and the MC5 up with Jerry Wexler of Atlantic records, who wanted to sign the band as soon as they were officially released from Elektra. Sinclair and the band were thrilled to be on Atlantic, the label of such soul and R&B greats as Ray Charles, LaVerne Baker, Clyde McPhatter and many others. The MC5's new contract with Atlantic was inked in the spring of 1969. After the deal was signed, again in New York, Sinclair went back to Ann Arbor to stand trial with Fred Smith on charges of assaulting a police officer at The Loft, a teen dance joint in Oakland County, the previous summer. Fred was acquitted, but Sinclair was found guilty, thrown in jail and had his long hair sheared off. Out on bail, Sinclair flew to Philadelphia to meet up with the band, where they would be playing a gig with Alice Cooper. It wasn't long before Sinclair was on trial again, this time for possession of two marijuana cigarettes. The result was Sinclair being sentenced on July 25, 1969 to ten years in prison, although he would only serve 29 months of the sentence. Before Sinclair was jailed, however, the band had already decided to discharge Sinclair as their manager, claiming that he was becoming too "power hungry." Sinclair, on the other hand, claimed that the band were trying to "purge themselves of revolutionary tendencies" in an effort to gain more acceptance. It's common knowledge that while Sinclair did garner the band much attention, he began to really try to control the band's work. The MC5, especially Fred Smith, grew increasingly dissatisfied with Sinclair. In a July 1975 interview with *Gulcher* magazine, Wayne Kramer had this to say about Sinclair and why their relationship fell apart: "Chalk it all up to John Sinclair's pseudo rock and roll Marxism. It's a myth, and it was a myth back then. You'd have 35 freaks living in a house and the five of us would be working. They'd be sitting around, getting high, and talking about 'people's music' while they'd type their press releases all day. It made for good copy and all, but it was all John's trip and I admire him for it. It was a noble experiment."

While Sinclair was on trial, the MC5 decided to move ahead with their plans to record a new studio LP. Sinclair and Atlantic had hooked the MC5 up with *Rolling Stone* critic Jon Landau, now deciding to try his hand at producing rock acts. Landau had been responsible for getting the MC5 hyped in an issue of *Rolling Stone*, and it was thought that he would let the MC5 make a great studio rock 'n' roll LP. Jon came in to Detroit while the band was rehearsing new songs at GM studios, where they'd be recording the new LP. Rehearsal tapes of the band during the week of July 21-25, 1969 show the band banging out versions of tunes slated for the album almost as strong as they did them live. This has now become available on the



American Ruse CD and accompanying ten-inch release, both on Alive! The CD is culled from those pre-production rehearsals for the *Back In The USA* album, and so you get rougher versions of some of the songs slated for that LP. Some appear twice, as instrumentals, and then with vocals, including "Looking At You," "The American Ruse," and "Tonight." Others, like "High School" and "Call Me Animal" have no vocal tracks whatsoever! As Sinclair claims, the versions here are rougher and rawer than the Jon Landau produced sessions. (As a bonus, the CD also adds live versions of "I Believe To My Soul" and a 13-minute-long "Black To Comm," both of which initially appeared on the *Powertrip* ten-inch version only. To complicate matters, the ten-inch version of *American Ruse* contains five songs from the CD, two of which are "alternate takes" and the *Powertrip* version of "Black To Comm"). What these rehearsal sessions yielded, however, wasn't what Landau wanted. He wanted the songs performed tighter and cleaner. The resulting *Back In The USA* LP was released in 1970 on Atlantic. Many MC5 fans, and even the MC5 themselves were initially taken aback by this release. Most of the feedback and heaviness was gone, to be replaced by a much more "mainstream" rock sound. While *Back In The USA* is not a terrible LP, and it does actually have some strong moments, it doesn't sound that much like the MC5 of before. The songs are shorter, and more concise. Landau also brought in session keyboardist Danny Jordan to add more of a "pop" touch. Despite the clean production, songs such as "The American Ruse," "Call Me Animal" and "The Human Being Lawnmower" stand out, due in part to strong social commentary in the lyrics. Compared to much of the rock community's output at that point, the album was certainly more energetic and closer to anything resembling Rock 'n' Roll, save for any of the few other bands mining similar musical territory around that time. It just didn't have the power and HIGH ENERGY sound that the *Kick Out The Jams* LP had. Regardless, the band continued to maintain some of its rebellious stance with the foggy cover photo showing the band soaking wet in sweat and probably higher than kites. They also continued to use the group credit of the MC5 for the songs on the album. By the time the LP was released, John Sinclair was in prison. When he first heard this new MC5 LP, he says, "I simply couldn't stand it. Landau had emasculated the MC5's musical attack." Sinclair felt that the band had been "neutered" by Atlantic and Jon Landau. Wayne Kramer defended the LP in that same *Gulcher* interview by saying, "The first album was pure high energy. The second album was a neat, clean thing. Guitars in tune. Everything was perfect. And people said, 'That's not the MC5!' They're fucked, what can I say? That album, what we set out to do, was to make a perfect rock and roll record. It was tight, together..." The LP also garnered high praise from underground music critics such as Metal Mike Saunders, Eddie Flowers, Wayne Davis and Greg Shaw.

DTP: How did you feel about the subsequent LP, *Back in the USA*.

WK: Well, John Sinclair and the band agreed that John Landau should

produce the record, because he was the first guy who understood bands on a kind of intellectual basis, to bring a perspective to it. That was right at the point when there was a lot of police pressure on the MC5. The MC5 had reached such a peak that when you say you're going to destroy the system and corrupt the youth of America by any means necessary, the police take you seriously. Any time you take a political stand, especially a high-energy militant stand, you'll guarantee a political reaction from whatever power structure exists. So, when John Mitchell and G. Gordon Liddy and the whole gang at the White House heard that these radicals in Ann Arbor were talking about destroying America, they took us seriously, and they used everything they could against us. The prevailing attitude amongst police agencies was "When is somebody going to do something about the MC5?" We had non-stop problems from the police from the very beginning. We couldn't do that song, harassment, searching our van, citing us for playing too loud. On a higher level, the Feds were always bugging our phones, you'd hear "click-click-click" when you used it. Ultimately, it all focused on them locking John Sinclair up for 10 years for two marijuana cigarettes. Because he represented the MC5, he ended up taking the heat for the MC5. They figured the way to break the MC5's back was to jail their manager. And they succeeded, for the most part.

DTP: Did this all happen during the *Back in the USA* sessions?

WK: Right when we were beginning to record it. So, we'd lost Sinclair, and we'd lost our original connection to who we were, and we were floundering there for awhile. We made the best record we knew how to make, and Jon Landau helped us make the best record we knew how to make. That was also the first record he produced. Looking back on it now, it's a good document.

They're great songs, and it stands up well. It alienated some of our local constituency in the Detroit area, but it gained us new fans in the rest of the world. People that who were put off by the harshness of *Kick Out The Jams* liked *Back in the USA*.

DTP: Some of the longer, more experimental things people might not have understood.

WK: Yeah, and people that weren't really open enough to hear that, they liked *Back In The USA*. I think that record kind of set the pace for what was to come later in punk rock, with the two-minute slam-bam songs. By the time we got to *High Time*, we realized the mistakes of both LPs, and it was an evolution because all bands go through that.

DTP: Of course.

WK: So, we ended up in the position where we actually made a great record, but at that point, Atlantic wasn't interested anymore. There's a way of doing business in the record business, when a major label signs a band. Say they sign five bands, they're kind of hoping one band is going to go platinum, and the other four bands can eat shit and die. That's what happened to the MC5. The fact that we didn't do platinum with *Back In The USA*, well they let us make *High Time*, and then they dropped us! They had new bands that weren't as much trouble as us, that weren't as dangerous. Their entire ad campaign for *High Time* consisted of a half page ad we had to share with a new band on Atlantic called The Allman Brothers. The larger context is that this was happening at a time when rock was trying to be elevated to "high art." In America, and in rock 'n' roll, there's always an attempt to be classist. The MC5 were essentially a blue collar band, we didn't fit



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into the East/West coast sounds, or the British sound. We didn't fit into any of that. We had to make all of this stuff up ourselves, and we had an attitude about it. It was hard, it was aggressive, and it was arrogant. Let's face it, it was working class and we didn't fit into this idea of high art. We blew all that shit to smithereens, and so it was much more comfortable to just make the MC5 "go away." You add the police pressure, based on our political stance, and this kind of rock 'n' roll elitism. In California, they were making all this kind of hippy-dippy music, and none of those people could play as far as I was concerned. There was nothing happening on the East coast, apart from a few bands that were doing something, but for the most part it was all horseshit. They didn't want to know what we were talking about, it was much easier to let it all go away.



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DTP: Did you have more freedom with the recording of *High Time*?
 WK: Not freedom in terms of somebody telling you what to do and not to do, but freedom in terms of taking responsibility for yourself. Because freedom ain't free. It's like two sides of the same coin, one side says "freedom" and the other side says "responsibility." So, we took the responsibility of our work and band ideas and made it happen.
 DTP: So, you really like *High Time*?
 WK: Oh, yeah! As far as the MC5 records go, it's my favorite. It points the direction the MC5 were going in, kind of where I'd like to think I've picked up with *The Hard Stuff*.

High Time was released with almost no promotion in 1971 by Atlantic. It did, however, come out in a classy gatefold cover with a great live action photo of the MC5 rockin' out. Various guests, including Bob Seger, make appearances on this, the MC5's most experimental album. The band produced it themselves, with some help from an engineer named Geoffrey Haslam at Artie Fields Studios in Detroit, a studio run by a former swing band leader from the 1940s. *High Time* has some of the MC5's strongest songs on it, like the great seven-minute "Sister Anne" featuring Rob Tyner's inspired harp and organ playing. The initial backing track for this song was laid down in the summer of 1970 by the band while they were on tour in the U.K., and finished off back home in Detroit! Some of the other stand-out tunes include "Future/Now," and the powerful "Poison." The recording of *High Time* was also the first time the MC5 were totally in control of their own project. Actually, the MC5 had attempted to gain more control previous to *Back In The USA*, but as mentioned earlier, had it wrenched away from them when Jon Landau took over production chores. Regardless, the MC5 had much more control, and spent a great deal of time experimenting with the songs and recordings. Despite the fact that *High Time* is a great record, it went pretty much unnoticed, although it would go on to become a collector's item later on. *High Time* is THE record the MC5 had wanted to make all along. It's ironic that it would be their last, but even the record songwriting credits show the initial splits beginning; for the first time, the tracks are credited to individual writers. Smith writes four, Kramer gets two, Tyner gets one, and even Dennis Thompson gets one. Michael Davis is remarkably absent of any writing credits. Davis would also be the first to leave, as well. Undaunted, the band trudged back to the U.K. during the summer of 1971 for one final fling, without Davis initially. "I

didn't even go with the band," said Davis in a 1992 interview with *Freakout USA* magazine. "I got there late and missed the London School of Economics gig. Dennis picked me up at the airport and said 'Everybody's pissed.' I was there a few weeks, we played a few gigs, and the band was supposed to go to France, and I got called into the office and they said 'You're going to be replaced.'" During the time the MC5 were in England, they recorded three songs for a British movie called *Gold*. Noticably missing from the recordings is Michael Davis, who had gone back to the States by then. Two of the songs appear on the now quite rare soundtrack to the film, while an unreleased title track named after the film stayed in the can. The song, "Gold," a pretty cool semi-free-form excursion with poetic words by Tyner, saw the light of day when Wayne Kramer compiled a cassette for ROIR tapes in 1983 called *Babes In Arms*, which has been subsequently reissued on vinyl and CD. The material on this release was culled from Wayne's own collection of "reference masters," many of which contained different mixes, takes and so forth of *High Time* and *Back In The USA* songs, plus those early MC5 singles.

While on tour in Europe, the MC5 also found out they'd been dropped by Atlantic. Atlantic's official reason was that the MC5 had spent too much money on the recording of *High Time*. The rest of the band returned to Detroit again, and attempted to keep the band going. They hired a new bassist, Steev Moorhouse, and journeyed to France to work up a prospective deal with Phillips. The *Thunder Express* CD, on Skydog, documents some of the last recorded moments of this line-up of the MC5, recorded at Herouville Castle in March of 1972. The band sounds a little ragged, the sound is pretty raw, and they jam out MC5 faves like "Kick Out The Jams" and "Ramblin' Rose." They also do "Empty Heart" by the Rolling Stones, and a new tune from which the CD gets its title. The Phillips deal fell through, and the band returned once again to the States. At this point,



The MC5 at Herouville, 1972

both Rob Tyner and Dennis Thompson quit (Thompson apparently had to seek Methadone treatment). The MC5 had another European tour booked, and so to honor commitments, Smith and Kramer took a ramshackle band dubbed "the MC4" to Europe.

DTP: Now, when did the MC5 actually split up for good?

WK: In late 1972. The band just started to disintegrate. Michael Davis actually split first.

DTP: Didn't you do some gigs as "the MC4"?

WK: Yeah, we had a European tour booked right at the end, and Rob refused to go. Then Dennis refused to go because Rob wasn't going. Michael had already left the band, so it was essentially Fred and I and an unknown rhythm section. We were really hideous, we really sucked! There's a bootleg floating around of one of those shows, and it's really bad. Good guitar playing, but it's not the MC5.

DTP: So, that's the end of the MC5. What did you all do?

WK: Well, the worst thing we did, and the MC5 did a lot of great things, but the worst thing that happened at the end was that we all denied each other. We denied our brothers. We had all gone through the fire together, and one day we all just walked away from each other. It was a tremendous loss. We were in denial on a massive scale.

DTP: And you guys really were "brothers," too. There was a great amount of camaraderie evident on some of those live recordings where you all introduce each other as "Brother Wayne," "Brother Fred," and so forth.

WK: It's a term of endearment and affection that we still use, that I still use to people I'm close to. But, with the 5, we all kind of pretended that it never happened. Of course, any time you suffer a loss like that, there's a process of grief and loss, and you deny it. The denial becomes painful, and so you find ways to kill the pain, or distract yourself. For me, it became crime and drugs. I probably saw *The Godfather* too many times, wanted to carry a pistol and drive a big car and go to "business meetings" in nice restaurants.



Kramer's Kreamers, 1975 - the New MC5?

DTP: Drugs obviously played a big part in the MC5's career.

WK: It was a major part of the whole generation, because the government had lied to us about marijuana, and so we figured that if they'd lied to us about reefer — they'd lied to us about the war, the police, they lied to us at The Democratic Convention — so they were lying to us about all these other drugs, too. It was a question of having to find out for ourselves.

DTP: What were the substances you guys were using most?

WK: In the MC5, we drew a real distinction between what we called "life drugs" and "death drugs." Our parents' generation, who we separated ourselves from, chose alcohol, and we chose reefer and LSD. Then later, all that kind of evoked for myself personally back into alcohol, and of course the ultimate painkiller, narcotics. To this day, I don't have a problem with reefer, I think it's a really mild drug. People that smoke pot, I don't give a shit (in a recent issue of *High Times*, Kramer admits to still smoking a little pot now and then — ed.). But the rest of it all becomes the same to me, it all becomes a tremendous waste of time. Time is the most valuable thing you have.

DTP: What about psychedelics?

WK: Well, they're not for everybody! I think it's all a waste of time, because when you're fucked up you can't do anything but be fucked up. You can't make love, you can't write a song, you can't play sports. You can't really do anything except be fucked up. Now, there is a kind of medical anaesthetic to that, too. If a person has so much pain that they need to be numbed out, if someone needs a powder or potion to make it through the day, I say, "Give it to 'em!" There's always going to be a small percentage of the population that needs to get high everyday. I'd rather have them have it than have them break into my house and steal for their habit. The European concept of "harm reduction" is the only thing that makes sense in a civilized world. Unfortunately, Amerika is anything but civilized, with this fucking "War on Drugs." It's unreal!

DTP: When you got into the drugs and crime thing, were you still doing music?

WK: Yeah I was still playing.

DTP: How long before you were incarcerated?

WK: Well, I was in prison in '75, about three years after the MC5's demise. Detroit was real devastated economically by then. The Japanese crushed the Detroit auto industry, and the energy crisis was beginning. So, you know, there were no places to play, no record companies, the city was flooded with dope. Everyone I knew was either in jail, on their way to jail, or getting out of it. Of course, I got caught up in the middle of a huge crime scheme that blew up in my face, and ended up with me doing two years in Federal prison, which in a way kind of saved me. I was really wandering. I was 24 years old when the MC5 broke up, my entire life was poured into that band. Then one day, it was all gone, my brothers, my best friends, my way of making money. I was tossed out on the street, and with no support system on any level anywhere, so I lost my way. I drifted into bad company, and doing wrong is a way of getting attention, too. So, I did wrong and ended up going to prison. In a way it saved me, 'cause I could've ended up dead.

DTP: Didn't you also meet Charlie Parker's horn player while in prison?

WK: A wonderful musician named Red Robbins, who played trumpet with Parker! We had a jazz band, and we did regular shows every Sunday afternoon for the rest of the prisoners. He was a wonderful man. The most kindest, gentlest, most creative musician I've ever known. He'd taught at the Berkeley School of Music for writing and arranging, so musically it was nothing but good. I mean, I went in being a pretty cool rock guitarist, and came out a decent musician.

DTP: How did you meet Mick Farren?

WK: I met Micky in '71. Micky had a band in England called the Deviants, and also wrote for the *International Times*, who promoted a festival in England and brought the MC5 to England in 1969. So, we went there and became friends, started writing songs together after the MC5 broke up.

DTP: Didn't he put together some sort of benefit single for you?

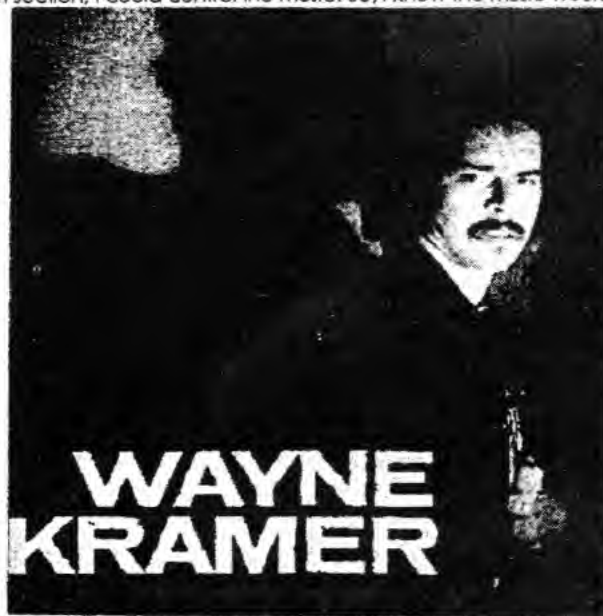
WK: Jake Riviera, Elvis Costello's manager, and a man named Ted Carroll, they had Stiff and Chiswick, two of the first independent labels in England. They put out a couple of demos of me and Mickey's stuff, while I was still locked up. It was really like a brotherly solidarity on their part. I was sitting in the penitentiary, and these guys in England say "We'll put out a single by you." Then they gave me all the money from it!

DTP: Did you get right back on the music track when you got out of prison?

WK: Yeah, I got a job with Johnny Thunders, I'd just met him, and I knew there was a problem with Johnny 'cause he was a dope fiend.

DTP: This was when, 1978?

WK: I was locked up until '78. I was in 26 months, then I still had three months in a halfway house. But, ah, playing with Johnny... the punk thing was really taking off, but I'd missed the whole thing being in jail. Johnny was real dynamic on stage, I thought that with me and my rhythm section, I could control the music. So, I knew the music would



1979

new album that people seem to like. My pal Henry Rollins might be a little right of me when he says, "There's no such thing as spare time," but I think he's essentially on the money. Time is the most important thing you have. You can buy a new pair of boots, or a new CD player, but you can't buy any more time. If you don't make a contribution to the world, to your culture or to your neighborhood, to your friends and your family, if you don't make any kind of contribution then you'd better stop dicking around. People say, "Well, this isn't important," or "that doesn't matter." Well, I think everything matters. Time is important. I'm of average intelligence, and if I can do what I've done, then imagine what anybody else can do! I think what all this represents, what my work represents, is a sense of possibilities. There's a possibility to make a new kind of music, you can have a new type of lifestyle, you can "reinvent" yourself. You don't have to do what your parents did, or what all the people around you do. You can do anything that you conceive of, if you conceive that you can do it. There's the possibility that you could change the world.

DTP: What bands that were influenced by the MC5, and other Detroit groups like the Stooges have done is take that influence, and add their own twist to it. I like to see that cycle continuing, because that's what you guys did with the influence of Blues and R & B.

WK: I think that the entire punk movement is the movement that wouldn't go away, because there's enough of us that love that sound! Loud guitar and drums! You know, the music business tried to clean it up and call it "new wave" but these kids in smelly basements, playing for twenty of their friends, they're doing it because they love the music, and it won't go away. So, it builds, neighborhood by neighborhood, to the point where some unknown band from Orange County like the Offspring all of the sudden takes off. Music can change your life! My generation were living out Bob Dylan and Rolling Stones songs. The power that music has can reinvent possibilities.

DTP: Music can change your life, and it can save it, too. I know it saved mine!

WK: In some ways, I'm glad that the MC5 didn't become really popular, because I'm not proud of a lot of people from my generation. They're not holding up too well! Like The Who, I mean the idea of a "rock opera" turns my stomach. And Jimmy Page, I used to dig Jimmy Page, but he and his buddy out there with a string section? What's that got to do with rock 'n' roll? That's really offensive. In general, they're not holding up too well.

DTP: Even Iggy Pop, to an extent.

WK: Well, Iggy managed to survive. That's the main thing with him, he just survived. He always got a new record out, managed to come the other side of the whole substance abuse thing.

DTP: I guess it's better than dying, or burning out.

WK: There's a tremendous attrition rate in rock 'n' roll as a lifestyle. It's a really brutal business to get into. Because you're generally dealing with young people and all their hopes and dreams are tied up in this business and their band, their songs, their career. More often than not, it's not going to go anywhere, or something will start and it'll fizzle out. Then you're stuck with that sense of loss, and that's when people discover things like heroin and alcohol, because it kills the pain. That's a whole new set of problems to deal with. Kurt Cobain, he had a tremendous amount of pressure to deal with. The record company should have just left Nirvana alone, said, "Take a year to follow up that hit album." Nothing can prepare you for success. If you don't know who you are, or you're the least bit fragile, which a lot of artists are. They have a real heightened sense of creativeness, but it can put you in a precarious position emotionally. If you don't have a real solid foundation and know who you are, all of the sudden you've got all this money, you're getting free sex, everybody laughs at your jokes, everything's going wonderfully. It's like doing a drug, and you can lose your ship behind you. There's a price to be paid for succeeding, and money doesn't make you happy. It keeps uncomfortableness further away, but if you've got a lot of psychological demons, they're not going to get any better just because you're selling a bunch of records. You'll need professional psychological intervention! I'm a big fan of counselors, because you can't count on your friends, they're in it with you. In a clinical situation, you can deal with the issue. It's cool 'cause you can't figure it out yourself!

DTP: So, how did you hook up with the guys from Epitaph?

WK: Well, I moved to L.A. because Marjorie was finishing up her graduate work at Vanderbilt and once she finished, well Nashville was

no place for me. I mean, that's white bread, Republican, Conservative Bible Belt, good ol' boy territory.

DTP: It must've been weird living there.

WK: Well, it's a real civilized place to live, but it's still the deep south. I have some good friends there who helped me, people who were real open to what I was trying to do, but that's not the place for an Anarchist rock 'n' roller! So, we moved to L.A. in '94. When I got here, I started calling in all favors, old Detroit homeboys and people I knew in the music business. I'd written a batch of songs, and so I just started calling people and going to meetings with A&R guys. Donita Sparks from L7 said, "Have you talked to Epitaph?" I'd heard Bad Religion, and Donita knew Brett Gurewitz to be honest and fair with people, as well as being very sharp. So, I called him up on the phone and said "I got these songs," and he said, "Are they punk?" and I said "Hell, yeah!" So, I brought 'em over and he said, "The songs are great, but the sound isn't happening." I'd cut them as good as I could in Nashville, but what they do in Nashville has nothing to do with cutting edge rock. So he said, "You can cut them anywhere you want, any studio you want, we'll work out some money for you. If you don't like it in the end, forget the whole thing, you don't owe me anything."

DTP: Wow, that's a good deal!

WK: Yeah, so I said, "Geez, here's a serious guy with some sense of integrity, who'll put his money where his mouth is. We talked some more about how to work it out, he said, "There's some great players who would love to work with you on this project." I didn't have a band or anything, all I had was these songs. I knew how to record them, how to make a record, so Brett encouraged me all the way. Every step, he'd stop by the studio to hear what we were doing. He said, "Let me know when you mix this stuff, 'cause I want to make sure your guitar is loud enough!"

DTP: You also played guitar on "Incomplete" on the Bad Religion album. How was it playing with the guys from Clawhammer, Rancid and so forth on the new one?

WK: My experience with all those musicians has been a joy. It was like we all learned from the MC5, I just had a more direct route! For example, on some of the more experimental tracks on *The Hard Stuff*, I told 'em "This is gonna be free. There'll be no beat, no key, just start with this theme and go "out" from there." Everyone knew what I was talking about!

DTP: The cuts with the Clawhammer guys worked very well just because I imagine they knew exactly where you were coming from!

WK: It wasn't always like that, either. In the '70s and even in the '80s, I'd try to work with musicians, and I'd say, "Now we're going to go out" and they'd say, "What do you mean, 'out'? You can't do that!" I'd say, "Oh yes you can, just watch me!"

DTP: Do you have a band now?



Wayne Kramer, 1994

WK: Yes, Randy Bradbury from Pennywise is the bassist in my touring band now, and the drummer's name is Brock Avery. He's not on *The Hard Stuff*, I met him after we'd done recording that. He's from Liquid Jesus, and he's also in an experimental band called Squash who put out a great record. So, that's the touring line-up.
 DTP: With that in mind, I think we've covered enough here.
 WK: Well, I really appreciate this, and meeting you two. It's great to make new friends!



The MC5 had a sordid history, but in their time they created some amazing music. Very few bands have been able to absorb the influences of rock n' roll, soul, blues and free jazz into as cohesive and unique musical vision as the MC5. After their breakup in the early 1970s, their legacy lived on. When punk rock happened in the mid-70s, many a band had been influenced by the MC5. Their records went in and out of print, making their availability difficult. A few bootleg recordings of some of their lo-fi live concerts popped up here and there. Although sporadic, ex-members of the MC5 continued to be involved in music in some way. As mentioned, Rob Tyner had a couple of different bands that played live, but never recorded. Michael Davis also did some time in federal Prison on drug-related charges, and spent some time playing in ex-Rationals singer Scott Morgan's band along with Fred Smith. As mentioned previously, Smith later had Sonic's Rendezvous Band, who were very lo-key. Dennis Thompson played in a few Detroit area bands, including the New Order, who released an LP in 1977, and the New Race. Both bands featured ex-Stooges guitarist/bassist Ron Asheton, with the latter featuring ex-members of Radio Birdman. Michael Davis also spent time with Ron Asheton in Destroy All Monsters, who released a few seven-inch singles in the late 1970s. Wayne Kramer had a outfit in 1974-75 called Kramer's Kreamers that featured some local Detroit musicians, and ended up doing some gigs as "the New MC5" shortly before he would be incarcerated in federal prison. His sporadic solo releases made after he got out of prison, his work with Death Tongue and Was (Not Was) never really captured the magic and HIGH ENERGY sound that the MC5 once had, in this writer's opinion. Kramer, Thompson and Davis would reunite briefly as the Motor City Bad Boys, backing up a young G.G. Allin at a few New York City shows, and on a 1981 single. Ironically it's this material, propelled along by Kramer's unmistakable guitar sound, that most harkens back to the days of the MC5. As mentioned previously, Thompson and Tyner had a pseudo MC5 going in the mid-'80s as well. It wasn't until 1990 that all the remaining members of the MC5 would share a stage again, playing a benefit reunion concert for Rob Tyner's family in Detroit.

More recently, Wayne Kramer has made quite the comeback with his *The Hard Stuff*, on Epitaph records. Picking up almost where the MC5 left off, this release is Kramer's return to form. On it, he's backed up by members of seminal L.A. punk bands like Clawhammer, Bad Religion, Circle Jerks, Muffs, Pennywise and Rancid. He's got the guitars turned up to 'loud' on this one, folks! Kramer hits back with full-force on righteous tunes like "Crack In The Universe," "Bad Seed," "Edge Of The Switchblade" and his remake of the MC5's "Poison," on which the Melvins serve as his backing band. Easily, this is Kramer's most HIGH ENERGY release since the demise of the MC5. As Henry Rollins says in his liner notes to *The Hard Stuff*, "The MC5 were acknowledged as the messengers of the absolute heavy ordinance jams." And for me, Wayne Kramer and the MC5 will always KICK OUT THE JAMS, MOTHERFUCKERS!!!



The MC5 discography:

"I Can Only Give You Everything" / "Just One Of The Guys" 7-inch single 1967 (AMG 1001)
 "I Can Only Give You Everything" (different mix) / "I Just Don't Know" 7-inch single 1967 (AMG 100A, also reissued by Grease records 1977)
 "Looking At You" / "Borderline" seven-inch single 1968 (A Square 333, also reissued by Skydog records, 1977)
 "Kick Out The Jams" (censored) / "Motor City Is Burning" 7-inch single, 1969 (Elektra 45647)
 Kick Out The Jams LP 1969
 Track listing: *Rambling Rose* / *Kick Out The Jams* / *Come Together* / *Rocket Reducer No. 62* (Rama Lama Fa Fa Fa) / *Borderline* / *Motor City Is Burning* / *I Want You Right Now* / *Starship* (Elektra EKS-74042, reissued by Elektra on CD, 1994)
 Back In The USA LP 1970
 Track listing: *Tutti Frutti* / *Tonight* / *Teenage Lust* / *Let Me Try* / *Looking At You* / *High School* / *Call Me Animal* / *The American Ruse* / *Shakin' Street* / *The Human Being Lawnmower* / *Back In The USA* (Atlantic SD 8247, reissued by Rhino on CD, 1994)
 "Tonight" (different intro than LP version) / "Looking At You" (LP version) 7-inch single 1970 (Atlantic)
 High Time LP 1971
 Track listing: *Sister Anne* / *Baby Won't Ya* / *Miss X* / *Gotta Keep Movin'* / *Future Now* / *Poison* / *Over And Over* / *Skunk* (Sonically Speaking) (Atlantic SD 8285, reissued by Rhino on CD, 1994)
 "Train Music" and "Inside Out" are included on *Gold* soundtrack LP 1972 (English Mother MO 4001)
 Michigan Nuggets double LP 1980
 This compilation features all the early MC5 singles (Belvedere TY8-7100)
 Babes In Arms cassette 1983
 Track listing: *Shaking Street* / *American Ruse* / *Skunk* / *Tutti Frutti* / *Poison* / *Gotta Keep Moving* / *Tonight* / *Kick Out The Jams* / *Sister Anne* / *Future Now* / *Gold* / *I Can Only Give You Everything* / *One Of The Guys* / *I Just Don't Know* / *Looking At You* (ROIR 22 - reissued on LP and CD by Danceteria records in France, 1990)
 Do It LP 1987
 Track listing: *Back In The USA* / *Rock 'n' Roll Pips* / *Looking At You* / *Unknowed Rock* / *Motor City Is Burning* / *Tutti Frutti* / *Kick Out The Jams* / *19th Nervous Breakdown* (Revenge MIG5 EV 101)
 Sonic Sounds From The Midwest LP 1988
 Track listing: *Ramblin' Rose* / *The Human Being Lawnmower* / *Tonight* / *Rocket Reducer No. 62* / *It's A Man's*



World/Teenage Lust/Looking At You/The Fire Of Love/Shakin' Street/Kick Out The Jams/High Rise
 recorded live in Detroit, 1969 (Clean Sound CS1014)
 Live Detroit 1968/69 LP 1988
Track listing: Kick Out The Jams/Born Under A Bad Sign/I Want You Right Now/Shakin' All Over/Fire Of Love/Teenage Lust/It's A Man's World/Black To Comm (Revenge)
 Vintage Years LP/CD, 1990
 no track listing available (label unknown)
 Powertrip CD 1994
Track listing: Looking At You (instrumental version)/I'm Mad Like Eldridge Cleaver/Black To Comm/The Pledge Song/Head Sounds (Pt. 2)/Powertrip/I Put A Spell On You/Born Under A Bad Sign/I Want You (Alive CD 0005)
 Powertrip 10-inch EP 1994
Track listing: Come Together/I Want You/Powertrip/The Pledge Song/I Believe To My Soul/Black To Comm (Alive 006)
 Black To Comm CD 1994
Track listing: Ramblin' Rose/Kick Out The Jams/Come Together/Revolutionary Blues/Rocket Reducer No. 62/James Brown Medley: Cold Sweat-I Can't Stand Myself-There Was A Time/Upper Egypt/Tutti Frutti/Borderline/Born Under A Bad Sign/I Want You/Starship/I Believe To My Soul/Black To Comm
 live at the Sturgis Armory 1968/69
 (Receiver RRCD 185)
 Thunder Express CD 1994
Track listing: Kick Out The Jams/Empty Heart/Ramblin' Rose/Thunder Express/Rocket Reducer No. 62/Motor City Is Burning/I Can Only Give You Everything/I Just Don't Know**
 (Skydog 62254-2)
 recorded March 1972, Paris, except * taken from second single
 Looking At You CD 1994
Track listing: Intro/Human Being Lawnmower/Tonight/It's A Man's World/Teenage Lust/Looking At You/Fire Of Love/Shakin' Street/Ramblin' Rose/Rama Lama Fa Fa Fa/Starship/Kick Out The Jams/Black To Comm
 recorded live, date and location unknown (Receiver RRCD 193)
 "Ice Pick Slim" b/w "I'm Mad Like Eldridge Cleaver" 10-inch EP 1995 (Alive 008)
 The American Ruse CD 1995
Track listing: Tonight (instrumental)/The Human Being Lawnmower/Looking At You (inst.)/Looking At You/The American Ruse/The American Ruse (inst.)/Call Me Animal (inst.)/Tonight/Tutti Frutti/Teenage Lust (inst.)/High School (inst.)/Back In The USA/I Believe To My Soul/Black To Comm**
 original *Back In The USA* rehearsal sessions, 1969, except * live September 8, 1968, taken from *Powertrip* 10-inch version (Total Energy/Alive NERCD 2001)
 The American Ruse 10-inch EP 1995
*tracks: The American Ruse/Tonight/Tutti Frutti/The Human Being Lawnmower/Looking At You/Black To Comm**
 original *Back In The USA* rehearsal sessions except * live 1969 and taken from *Powertrip* CD (Total Energy/Alive, NER 2001)
 Related
 Rob Tyner with Eddie the Hot Rods "Till The Night is Gone"/"Flipside

Rock" 7-inch single 1978 (Island WIP-6418)
 Wayne Kramer:
 "Ramblin' Rose"/"Get Some" 7-inch single, 1978 (Stiff/Chiswick DEA/SUK-1)
 "The Harder They Come"/"East Side Girl" 7-inch single 1979 (Radar ADA-41)
 Who Shot You Dutch? 12-inch EP w/Mick Farren 1987 (Spectre)
 "Spike Heels"/"Take Your Clothes Off" 7-inch single w/Death Tongue, 1988 (Dad's Favorite Records DAD-1008)
 The Hard Stuff LP/CD 1994 (Epitaph 86447-2)
 I Only Wrote This Song For You: A Tribute To Johnny Thunders CD, 1995 (Essential ESSCD 223) includes "Children Are People Too"
 Destroy All Monsters (w/Michael Davis):
 "Bored"/"You're Gonna Die" 7-inch single 1978 (Cherry Red Cherry-3)
 "November 22, 1963"/"Meet The Creeper" 7-inch single 1979 (ibidi Monz-2)
 "What Do I Get"/"Nobody Knows" 7-inch single 1979 (Cherry Red Cherry-6)
 Self-titled 7-inch EP, 1979 (Black Hole, 18552)
 "These Boots Are Made For Walking" on *Detroit On A Platter* compilation LP 1981 (Automotive, AutoLP-1000)
 November 22, 1963 LP 1990 (Revenge, MIG 11)
 Compilation of all the singles, also available on CD.
 The New Order (w/Dennis Thompson):
 Self-titled LP 1977 (Isadora)
 Victim Of Circumstances LP 1989 (Revenge, MIG12)
 The New Race (w/ Dennis Thompson):
 The First and The Last LP 1982 (Trafalgar/WEA 2559601)
 Sonic's Rendezvous Band (w/ Fred Smith):
 "City Slang, Pt. 1" / "City Slang, Pt. 2" 7-inch single 1978 (Orchid/OR-1002)
 Sonic's Rendezvous Band/Destroy All Monsters split LP 1987 (Revenge) Includes "City Slang" single, studio & live cuts
 Strike Like Lightning LP 1989 (Black Adder)
 Culled from live material recorded 1978-79.
 Patti Smith (w/ Fred Smith):
 The Dream of Life LP, 1988 (Arista)
 Was Not Was (featuring Wayne Kramer):
 Was (Not Was) LP 1981 (Ze/Island)
 G.G. Allin w/ the Motor City Bad Boys (Kramer, Thompson & Davis):
 "Gimme Some Head"/"Dead Or Alive" 7-inch single, 1981 (Orange ORA-69)
 "Gimme Some Head" on *Hated In The Nation* cassette 1987 (ROIR A-148)
 The Masturbation Session 10-inch EP 1995 (Alive 011/10)
 Deviants (w/Wayne Kramer):
 Human Garbage LP, 1984 (Psycho 25)
 Bad Religion:
 Stranger Than Fiction LP/CD 1994 (Atlantic)
 Features Wayne Kramer on lead guitar on "Incomplete"
 Ten High:
 Four Shots From Detroit 10-inch EP 1994 (Marilyn TEST002/10)
 Features Wayne Kramer on lead guitar on "Gimme One."

VILETONES



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The Viletones were one of Canada's most outrageous and intense punk rock bands ever. Though they only released two seven-inch EPs during their brief existence, and later a live LP by a different incarnation of the group, they played many shows in the Toronto area during the 1977-78 period. All of these were filled with the band's manic energy, and lead singer Steve Leckie's shocking stage antics. When I was a teen, I stumbled across a copy of the first Viletones single at a used record store. It became a favorite of mine, and caused me to track down their second EP as fast as I could. Of course, by the time I found both of these releases, the Viletones had been broken up for about three years. Still, I thought that the Viletones were a great Canadian punk rock band, and those two small doses of manic music are still faves of mine to this day. I only saw them once, and it wasn't even the original group, but the show was wild anyway. The memory lives on forever, and so when we decided to do this magazine of '70s stuff, I jumped at a chance to write about the Viletones. That, and the release of an entire CD of 1977 recordings by the Viletones, made me want to present a look at these Canadian punk rock legends.

The Viletones were formed in 1977 by Steve Leckie, son of a successful ad executive, after he placed an ad in *The Toronto Star* looking for a band. Steve Leckie adopted the stage name "Nazi Dog," part of his strategy to shock and offend the stagnant Toronto rock crowd. Leckie, a huge David Bowie fan, wanted to form a band because he was dissatisfied with the local music scene. "The whole idea for me was to tear down what was too big about music," says Leckie. "In an era of, if it wasn't disco, it was Emerson, Lake and Palmer. It was all bands like Genesis and Yes, and rock operas everywhere. The last thing you'd want was to be like that."

Leckie was joined by guitarist Freddie Pompeii (nee Pasquale), bassist Jackie Death and drummer Motor X (nee Mike Anderson). Pompeii was an American living in Canada, who'd done time in a later version of the Syndicate Of Sound, the mid-60s garage-pop band that scored a hit with "Hey, Little Girl." He had been playing the coffee house circuit as a solo acoustic folk artist, and was also a successful commercial artist. Anderson was an electrician by trade, and these days he works in the movie industry.

Leckie took to perfecting his lead singer position, while the band worked on creating a loud, but tight, musical cacophony. Leckie also wrote words, inspired by his favorite poet Arthur Rimbaud, but with a decidedly self-destructive/self-deprecating element to them influenced by Iggy Pop and Sliv Bators. Decked out in short, spiky orange hair, dog collar and leather pants, Leckie assaulted audiences with a barrage of screaming lyrics and self-abusive stage persona. He had now taken to cutting and slashing himself on stage for the ultimate shock value. "I had a strong identification with [violence]," says Leckie. "And it eventually cost us a couple of band members. It was synonymous, and an integral part of the music."

At early shows, the band handed out leaflets with the "Viletones Manifesto" on it. "The war must start," the manifesto proclaimed. "The new order is the Viletones." Jackie Death left after a few gigs and was

replaced by Chris Hate (nee Poppuffs). Chris had been in the early '70s hippie-pop group Everyday People, who released one LP, and then the powerpop outfit Zoom, who also released a single in 1976. "Our first show was at the Colonial Tavern," Leckie recalls. "So was the second, and then the third was at CBGB's in New York."

The band was soon playing regularly to Toronto punk audiences, performing a mix of punk covers and Leckie originals, with other local bands like the Diodes, the Curse and Teenage Head. Local bands were ignoring the usual route of trying to get signed by dumb Canadian major labels. Instead, they were recording in cheap studios, often run by friends, and pressing and releasing their own records. It wasn't long before the Viletones had their own single out, as well, the classic "Screamin' Fist" on their own Vile records. Culled from a spring 1977 recording session with Tibor Takacs, the song came crashing out at full-speed, propelled by Motor X's spastic drumming and Freddie's buzzsaw guitar. The single's B-side included "Possibilities," a slower "love" song with great "chunky" metallic guitar work, and "Rebel," another high-speed number commenting on the then shaky political climate in Quebec. A few months later, the single was re-released by a Quebec label called Montreco, but as a 12-inch, and without the picture sleeve, replacing it with one of the label's generic "punk rock" sleeves that were used for the label's other releases.

As they tightened up their live performances, the Viletones became Canada's Dead Boys, in terms of sheer power, energy and offensiveness. The band once advertised as a publicity stunt that Leckie would commit suicide on stage. Of course, he didn't, but the show of blood and mania was probably enough for most people.

Leckie dispensed with the self-abusive stage antics after less than a year, deciding to concentrate more on his singing style. Motor Mike Anderson left, and Chris Hate (now spelling his name Haight), switched to second guitar. Sam Ferrara (nee Ugly) was brought in on bass. This twin guitar line-up of the band played a few shows, by all reports to maximum effect. Around this time, the band also gained a manager in the form of Roger Mayne. Mayne had previously been the lead guitarist in the seminal Toronto '60s garage band the Ugly Ducklings, and took a liking to the band's energetic sound and insane stage show. Not only did he offer to manage the band and secure them better gigs, he also offered to produce their next sessions. New songs were cut, mixed and mastered at three different studios: Masters Workshop, Sounds Interchange and RCA Studios. The result was the five-song *Look Back in Anger* seven-inch EP, released in 1978 on Mayne's own Razor records. Even better than their debut, the EP contains strong Stooges-influenced tracks like "Don't You Lie To Me" (with some uncredited piano, probably courtesy of Mayne) and "Dirty Feelin'." Leckie's vocals are stronger, and the band sounds as aggressive as ever, though not quite as "out of control." "Backdoor To Hell" and "Swastika Girl" both gain from the use of cool backing vox, while "Danger Boy" is certainly the EP's standout track with its rockin' edge and Dead Boys-ish riffing. The EP ends on a great note, with Leckie shouting out "Freddie! Chris! Mike! Sam! Steve! Viletones!" All



St. Patrick's day, 1977: (l to r) Jackie Death, Freddie Pompeii, Steve Leckie, Motor Mike Anderson. Photo by Ralph Alfonso.



1978 (l to r): Chris Haight, Leckie, Anderson (hidden), Pompeii

was not well in the Tones, though, because soon afterward things began to crumble. Leckie's increasing drug and alcohol abuse were splitting the band, and Mayne was fed up trying to focus Leckie's anger into something more productive. Mayne had also become inspired by the burgeoning punk scene to reform the Ugly Ducklings, complete with their original 1965/66 line-up, and begin playing gigs again. Anderson left, and was replaced by another ex-Ugly member, Tony Vincent (nee Torcher). According to rock writer James Sensible, the Viletones also attempted to "go Rockabilly" just before this lineup's demise. When the band opened for the Buzzcocks in early 1979, they did indeed perform a set of Rockabilly-style tunes. It was also apparently the first time at a Viletones gig ever that someone threw something at Steve Leckie, and actually nailed him in the face! Haight and Pompeii quit the band shortly thereafter to dedicate their time fully to The Secrets, a powerpop type band they'd started with Mike Anderson and ex-Diodes drummer John Hamilton. The Secrets released one LP on Bomb records in 1980. The Viletones were soon no more. Leckie having put the name to rest sometime in 1980. The next couple of years saw him fronting a new band called the Disciples that played live, but never released anything.

In 1983, Leckie, now substance-free, decided to reactivate the Viletones name. Adding the cryptic Gideon, then Steve Koch (ex-Demics) on guitar, and calling back Sam Ferrara and Tony Vincent, they began playing out again sporadically around the Toronto area. It was this line-up that I mentioned earlier, and co-incidentally that very gig I attended was being recorded. The result was a live LP entitled *Saturday Night, Sunday Morning*, which came out in 1984 on the Topaz label. Picking the best songs from the show, the album is a pretty good listen. Although the "new" Viletones didn't have quite the manic energy that the original line-up had, it was still raw, straight-forward rock 'n' roll. A lasting thing this was not meant to be, however, and even this incarnation of the band broke up, with Leckie fronting a less noteworthy glam/metal band called Fleurs du Mal with second line-up Tones guitarist Steve Koch, and some lesser known outfits like Sex Tattoo Seven and Sinderella. The last I heard, Leckie was co-owner of a shop in Toronto, also called Fleurs Du Mal, and that the Viletones had reformed to play some gigs. Whether or not it was any of the



(l to r) Leckie, Motor Mike, Pompeii, Haight.

original members isn't known. Shortly thereafter, it was reported that he had fled town over certain discrepancies in the songwriting credits on the *Taste of Honey* CD brought up by the original Viletones members, Poppitts, Haight and Anderson. The CD is culled from the band's first recording session which resulted in the "Screamin' Fist" single, it shows the band at it's manic best. Surprisingly enough, it also proves the band to be a lot tighter than people gave them credit for as the entire session was recorded live to two-track, with no overdubs whatsoever! The CD has 17 tracks (18 if you include the uncredited "bonus track," a second run-through of the embryonic "Danger Boy."), all of which are amazing high-energy punk rock. Digitally remastered under the guidance of Peter J. Moore and Chris Spedding, all the energy of the original analog recordings have been preserved. Highlights include all three cuts from the Vile single, plus unreleased gems like "Dog Style," "C.O.N.T.R.O.L.," "Richard Speck," "I Hate You-Just For You," "Little Girl," plus early versions of "Danger Boy" and "Swastika Girl." Now, if only someone would release the Roger Maybe-produced sessions that resulted in the now-impossible-to-find second EP on Razor records.

For me, and I'm sure many others, the Viletones were one of Canada's most outrageous and crazed punk bands from the class of '77. With this CD, and hopefully this article, their legend lives on. Special thanks has to go out to Ralph Alfonso, who was there when all this was happening, by running the infamous Crash 'n' Burn club and managing the Diodes. As a result, he saw the Viletones perform many a time and wrote the following account of their very first public live performances, which has to this day remained unpublished.



Steve Leckie - The Colonial Tavern, 1977. Photo by R. Alfonso

A Night With The Viletones by Ralph Alfonso

It's St. Patrick's Day at the Colonial Tavern's "Underground" in Toronto (the "Underground" is a separate entity downstairs from the Colonial's main room). The place is packed with members of local punk rock bands, Ontario College of Art scenesters, as well as old drunks, seedy executives toasting to the luck of the Irish, and two policemen in for a few minutes to check out exactly what is going on. It's the first public appearance of the Viletones, a group whose only previous accomplishments included picking fights with art students.

"I've got a mission for this city," said lead singer Nazi Dog, 18, whose short-cropped, carrot-top red hair, missing teeth, and safety pins holding his clothes together make him a frightening son of the new English and American rock scenes. "And I'd kill myself for it."

The Viletones even have a foot in mid-60s music, thanks to guitarist Freddie Pompeii who played with a post-hit version of the Syndicate of Sound. Other members are Motor Mike on drums and Jackie Death, 18, on bass. Mike and Freddie are in their very late twenties.

Pamphlets given out at the door say the group is dissatisfied with Toronto's established bands who work the local bar circuit. "We're tired of the old ways," it says. "We think it's about time rock and roll was given back to the young in this city. The war must start!"

On stage, the Viletones generate an eerie mystique of animal energy and fear. It's the hard sound of new rock whose grisly apex comes when the singer splatters beer glasses across his mike stand (which is draped in a Nazi flag) and then cuts his arms with the jagged remains. Real blood. Real glass. It's the toll he and others (notably Iggy Pop) have had to pay for this guttural form of raw rock. Suddenly, he's mutilating his face and at times like this you wonder whether you're



Steve Lackie at the Colonial Tavern, 1977. Photo by Ralph.

supposed to applaud, find a doctor, or get the hell out of there.

"I'm going to keep doing this 'til I'm 25," said Nazi Dog between sets while Eva, his girlfriend, bandaged up his face and arms. "And then I plan on dying. The group's known it from the first time we got together. When they see the blood, they just play harder."

Since the Viletones formed last November, he's received close to 90 stitches (all in rehearsals). Tonight marked the group's 15th appearance together as a unit. Nazi Dog assembled the Viletones through a classified ad in *The Toronto Star*. Musical ability was second in importance to looks. "I got real lucky because I found the right guys and we blended real well," says Dog. His own ambitions began when he saw an Elvis Presley movie as a kid and later he cajoled girls to chase him and his friends around the block (just like the Beatles).

"This guy's sick," was Freddie's opinion. The guitarist was still nursing the loss of most of the friends he'd made since coming to Canada. "They saw what was going on and left."

It was a performance of violence, confusion and chaos. The other groups were awed, such total commitment to some sort of rock and roll cause was new to the scene. At one point, some of them pelted the stage with beer bottles that narrowly missed band members and skittered into the drum kit instead.

The Viletones have been invited to play the famous Rat club in Boston but they've turned it down, preferring to make it in Toronto instead. Nazi Dog thinks the New York bands are cold and unfeeling while the other Toronto groups are "faggots and copies." And as for the blood in his act, he unveiled his secret, "I don't mess with arteries.

I just go for the fat and muscle deposits."

Viletones discography:

"Screamin' Fist" b/w "Possibilities" and "Rebel" 7-inch EP 1977 (Vile Records 8277)

(re-released as a 12-inch by Montreco Records 1979)

Look Back In Anger 7-inch EP 1978

Tracks listing: *Don't You Lie To Me/Dirty Feelin'/Back Door To Hell/Swastika Girl/Danger Boy* (Razor records REP-1001)

Saturday Night, Sunday Morning LP 1984

Track listing: *Outta My Mind/Nothin' On You/Leave Me Alone/Possibilities/Dirty Feeling/Keep Running/Girl From My Past/Danger Boy/Last Guy In Town* (Topaz Records 01715)

A Taste Of Honey CD 1994

Track listing: *Never Feel Sad/I Hate You-Without You/Just For You/Dog Style/Screamin' Fist/I Don't Care/Little Girl/Possibilities/Danger Boy/Rebel/C.O.N.T.R.O.L./Richard Speck/Swastika Girl/Rather Be With Me-It's Me/Does She Jump/KGB/Won't You Let Me/Danger Boy*
(Other People's Music OPM 2104)



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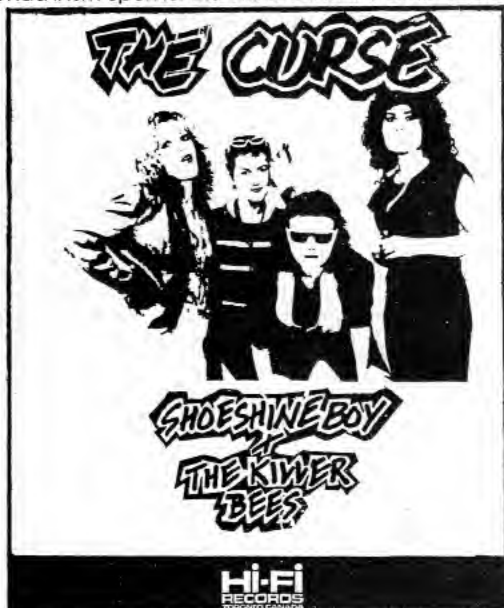
TORONTO 1977-79:

Certainly Toronto was one of Canada's leading punk centers, along with Vancouver and Montreal, and contributed a great number of bands to the scene. Besides the Viletones, there were a number of great Toronto area bands that made "the scene" at places like the Crash 'n' Burn club, the Horseshoe Tavern and the Edge. Very connected to the New York scene, many New York bands would play Toronto, and vice versa. "When we first started," says Joey Ramone, "Toronto was very open-minded to New York bands. It used to be New York-Boston-Toronto, a triad kind of thing." One weekend in 1977, three of Toronto's earliest punk rock bands, Teenage Head, the Viletones and the Diodes, all went down to CBGB's in New York for a "Canadian punk weekend."

Toronto produced a lot of cool punk bands during the initial punk emergence between 1977-79, and while this is by no means a complete overview, here are some of my fave bands from that time period. One of the best, although many in the punk scene were divided on their opinion of them, was the Diodes. Formed initially as a five-piece group, the Diodes started the Crash 'n' Burn club with their manager Ralph Alfonso.

"The Crash 'n' Burn was a gigantic warehouse basement, in an industrial building next to the Honest Ed restaurant. It was primarily the Diodes' practice space," says Ralph. "When they couldn't get any gigs in real clubs, we just decided to open it up and have our own club. It only lasted for about a month." There was even a Crash 'n' Burn newsletter, and a movie made to document the scene. Diodes drummer John Hamilton had been in Zoom (see Viletones article), while Ian Mackay (rhythm guitar), John Korvette (bass), John Catto (lead guitar) and Paul Robinson (lead vocals) were Ontario College of Art students. Korvette would leave the Diodes three months after their formation to join the Cads, with Mackay switching to bass. The Diodes were cool because they questioned both mainstream sensibilities while doing the same with punk aesthetics. They had a keen ear for catchy melodies, intelligent lyrics, and an instantly recognizable singer in Paul Robinson. They performed original material and the occasional cover of '60s nuggets like "Shape of Things to Come" (from the movie *Wild in the Streets*), "Red Rubber Ball" and "When I Was Young." The Diodes were one of the first punk bands to do it D.I.Y. style by releasing a seven-inch single (a split with the Curse), and also the first to "sell out" by signing with CBS in 1977! Despite that, their CBS debut LP is a classic, and their second LP *Released* scored some major AM radio airplay with "Tired Of Waking Up Tired." Look for the complete Diodes story in DTP #2!

The Curse were Toronto's first all-girl punk band. Freddie Pompeii of the Viletones "discovered" them in the rental department of a music store, and had them open for the Viletones at the Crash 'n' Burn. Their



singer Mickey Skin insulted the audience on a regular basis and the band wore sleazy, revealing outfits but you knew they'd kick your ass if you tried anything. Their first single was a split with the Diodes, although their side doesn't contain any music, just Skin blasphemising over a speech by a pretentious artist. Other members of the Curse were Patsy Poizon (drums), Trixie Danger (guitar) and Dr. Bourque (bass). When they did release their one and only single in 1978, it contained two classic punkers, "Shoeshine Boy" (about the brutal rape/murder of a young Toronto shoeshine boy) and "Killer Bees."

Teenage Head actually hailed from Hamilton, but played enough in Toronto during that summer of '77 enough to classify them as top contenders on the Toronto punk scene. Named after a Flamin' Groovies song, Teenage Head combined rockabilly and '60s punk influences with the Stooges for a heavy, but "rootsy" sound. Singer Frankie Venom (nee Kerr) sported dark eye shadow and short hair, while guitarist Gord Lewis and bassist Steve Mahon looked like refugees from the New York Dolls. Drummer Nick Stipanitz was balding even then, so he kind of looked like Eno circa Roxy Music. Their bizarre take on punk fashion aside, Teenage Head made great rocking music, resulting in a string of fairly successful albums starting with a CBS-distributed debut in 1978. After this, they were signed to the Attic label and scored two AM radio hits with "Something On My Mind" and "Let's Shake," both from their second LP *Frantic City*. Teenage Head were one of the top rated bands in the punk scene before they broke out into more mainstream acceptability, and they never failed to put on a tight, but still chaotic show. Even though Teenage Head did great originals, they weren't above whipping out covers of everything from the Dave Clark Five's "Wild Weekend" to the Stooges' "Cock in My Pocket." About those early days of Toronto punk, Gord Lewis says, "It was the first time I saw bands putting posters up on poles. It was the only way, you basically had to go out on the street and do it yourselves."

The Ugly were a Toronto punk band that had the dubious honor of having its singer get punched out by Phil Lynot (of Thin Lizzy) at a punk club during the summer of '77. What the hell Lynot was doing at a punk venue is another question. They consisted of Mike Nightmare on vocals, Mike's brother Raymie (aka Frankie Fury) on lead guitar, Chick Park (or Chick Kunte, as he was also known by) on rhythm guitar, Sam Ugly (nee Ferrara) on bass and Tony Torcher on drums. When both Sam and Tony left to join the Viletones, Tony Brighton was brought in to fill the bass spot, and Tony Torcher was replaced by the mysterious Green Lantern, although he stayed on long enough to play on their one and only single. Early on, the Ugly had a real Detroit/Stooges/MC5 kind of sound, as evidenced by the song "All Because Of You" which appeared on the live punk compilation *The Last Pogo*. By the time of that single from 1979, "Stranded In The Laneway (Of Love) b/w "To Have Some Fun," they had become a more Flamin' Groovies inspired powerpop outfit.

The Demics were London, Ontario, transplants. They had a hard-edged '60s punk updated for the '70s punk sound, as evidenced by their cool cover of "Talk Talk" (the Music Machine). They came onto the scene a little later than other bands, but instantly made a name for themselves with tight, rocking sets of mostly originals. Fronted by the charismatic Keith Whittaker on vocals, the Demics combined art-school intellectualism with streetpunk grittiness. The other three Demics included Rob Brent on guitar, Jim Weatherstone on drums and Ian Atkinson-Staines on bass. Their *Talk's Cheap* 12-inch EP on Ready Records from 1979 is excellent, containing the scathing commentary on the local punk/new wave scene "Talk's Cheap," and the 50-second-long "Oh Well." This EP was recently reissued on CD by Fringe Product out of Canada. A follow-up LP entitled simply *Demics*, featuring new guitarist Steve Koch (later of the Viletones) was released on the Intercan label the following year, and also contains some great, albeit a little less raw tuneage.

The Fits were one of the lesser known exponents of the Toronto scene, and were made up of Paul S. Bonk (vocals), Terry Webber (bass), Claude Dent (drums) and Art Davis (guitar). They got together in 1978, and shared stages at clubs like the Turning Point and the Rock Palace with Teenage Head and the Viletones. Their one and only three-song 45 from 1979 on Stagefright Records is excellent and worth picking up (if you can find it!) for the song "Bored of Education" alone. After the Fits broke up in 1980, Webber and Davis kept the group going as the Wanderers, a basic MOR-type band.



The "B" Girls were the Toronto scene's second all-girl punk band. Decked out in black outfits and stiletto heels, the group featured sisters Cynthia (bass) and Rhonda Ross (drums), Xenia Holliday (guitar) and Lucasta Rochas (vocals). Instead of the crude, rawer approach that the Curse took, the "B" Girls chose a more innocent, "pop" style with roots in surf music culture and girl groups of the 1960s. Like the Curse, they also wrote their own material, although they often paid homage to the past by covering songs like "It's Cold Outside" by the Choir. In 1979 they released their debut Bomb records single, "Fun at the Beach" b/w "B-Girls."

Arson were another lesser-known Toronto band that played out during this time also. Consisting of Rudy Tuesdal (vocals and tapes), Chic Parker (guitar), Marcel Lafleur (guitar and vocals), Spyke Bandito (bass) and former Viletone Mike Anderson (drums), Arson attempted to bridge the gap between art and punk with their one 45, "White Folks" b/w "Coho Coho." Released in 1979 on their own Motor Records, the A-side is a Television-style long number, and the flip is a fast, raw, piledriver of a tune with shouted vocals and maniac guitar playing. This single, along with an unreleased number, and the aforementioned Fits release are available on the *Smash The State* Volume One compilation, on No Exit records from Quebec, Canada. Mike Anderson also spent some time with John Hamilton (Diodes), and Freddie Pompeii and Chris Haight (Viletones) in the Secrets, who released an LP in 1980.

The Cardboard Brains were a really strange band that straddled the fine line between punk rock and art school thinking. They consisted of John Paul Young on vocals and keys, Vince Carlucci on guitar, John Thomas on bass and Dave Richardson on the drums. Their songs were truly strange lyrically, just check out "Babies Run My World" for proof. Their first seven-inch, released in 1977 on their own Brainco label, is by far their punkiest and best, containing a great, raw cover of "(I'm Not Your) Steppin' Stone." By the time of their second EP, "Black," (a 12-inch) they'd toned down the rawness for a more "new wave" approach. A subsequent limited edition (of 441 copies!) live LP was also released in 1982.

The Mods seemed to have one foot firmly planted in the early '60s mod sound, with echoes of the Who, Small Faces, etc., combined with punk energy. They definitely wanted to be the Jam of Canada. Dressed in matching black-and-white suits (skinny ties and all!), the Mods included Greg Triner (vocals), Mark Dixon (bass and vocals), Scott Marks (guitar) and David Quinton (drums). Triner had a really unique voice that people either loved or hated, and their hard-edged sound set them apart from other "mod revivalist" bands. In 1979, they released their debut single (on their own Mod label), "Step Out Tonight" b/w "You Use Me." They also appeared on *The Last Pogo* compilation, and released a 12-inch EP on Sensible Records in 1980 before they disbanded. Quinton would later show up in Los Angeles

as a member of Stiv Bators' band, and appears on Bators' *Disconnected* LP. He now works as an entertainment lawyer.

By late 1979, the scene was starting to fade. Most of the hard-edged bands had either broken up, or moved on to a more "new wave" style of music. "Toronto wasn't as organized as it should have been, in hindsight," says Ralph Alfonso. "Vancouver in some ways was way more ahead of Toronto. I think there's more visual documentation of the Vancouver scene than the Toronto scene."

"That whole era was under represented on vinyl," says former Demics/Viletones guitarist Steve Koch. "There were hardly any really good punk albums to come out of the scene, and it was one of the most important scenes in the world."

The Toronto art faction, which always had a strong interest in the "new music" scene infiltrated it even more and the new slew of bands reflected this tendency to play more "artsy" type music, less rock 'n' roll based. Most of the cool punk clubs had closed (a film, and subsequent live LP *The Last Pogo* documents the last night of the Horsehoe Tavern having punk shows) and the scene was dying... until the emergence of hardcore, but that's another story.

Recommended Toronto Punk Listening:

Arson "White Folks"/"Coho Coho!" seven-inch single, 1979 (Motor 0001)

"B" Girls "Fun at the Beach"/"B-Girls" seven-inch single, 1978 (Bomb! 123)

Cardboard Brains *Cardboard Brains* seven-inch EP, 1977 (Brainco Worldwide CB 7779)

Curse "Shoeshine Boy"/"Killer Bees" seven-inch single, 1978 (Hi-Fi)

Demics *Talk's Cheap* EP, 1979 (Ready EPRR-001)

Demics *Demics* LP, 1980 (Hypnotic/Intercan IC-1010)

Diodes *The Diodes* LP, 1977 (Columbia PES-90441)

Diodes *Released* LP, 1979 (Epic/CBS PEC-80002)

Fits *Bored Of Education* seven-inch EP, 1979 (Stage Fright)

Mods "Step Out Tonight"/"You Use Me" seven-inch single, 1978 (Mod 001)

Teenage Head "Picture My Face"/"Tearin' Me Apart" seven-inch single, 1978 (IGM/Epic E4-8273 or Bellaphone BF 18620)

Teenage Head *Teenage Head* LP, 1979 (IGM/Epic PEC 90534)

Teenage Head *Frantic City* LP, 1980 (Attic LAT-1081)

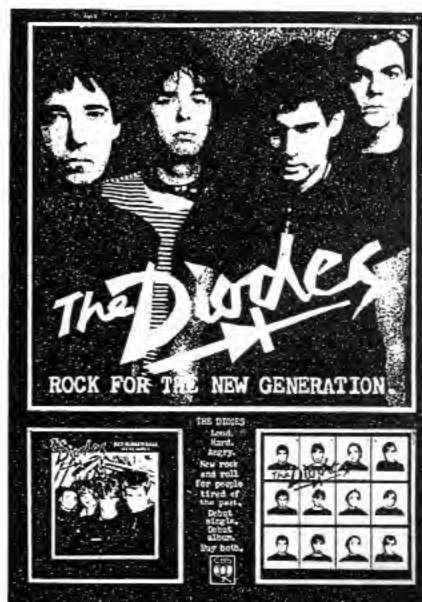
The Ugly "Stranded In The Laneway" / "To Have Some Fun" seven-inch single, 1978 (Explosion ER-101)

Various *The Last Pogo* live LP, 1978 (Bomb 7029)

Includes the Mods, Secrets, Ugly and more.

Various *No Pedestrians* compilation LP, 1980 (Chameleon CR-535)

Includes exclusive cuts by Arson and the Secrets.





Teenage Head at Crash 'n' Burn

DEMICS



TALK'S CHEAP



step out tonight



•The Diodes, (Ian, Paul, John Hamilton, John Catto). Toronto's first major punk band were not punky enough for CBS...

DROOGS EXAMINED



Joey Hoey, Ric Albin, Roger Clay and Kyle Raven at the Starwood, 1974.

Twenty-three years with America's most enduring independent band

by Lisa

In an era where professional baseball players strike for more money, it's rare to see such dedication as the Droogs possess. Remarkably, the Droogs have persevered independently and on their own terms for 23 years, through the multitudes of musical trends, and despite scant financial reward. The Droogs' staunch anti-commercialism is present in all of their work, from their 1973 single to their new album, Atomic Garage. Needless to say, you'll never catch this band on VH1's "Where Are They Now?" program. The Droogs were called "the granddaddies of psychedelic rock" in 1978. Their hard work and love of rock 'n' roll, and the support from a small but dedicated legion of fans has kept them going. This is their story. . .

The Early Years

Ric Albin and Roger Clay met during junior high school in 1966 in Los Angeles' San Fernando Valley. "We were just guys hanging around on the corner who formed a band to play the hits of the time," Ric says. "We were just jamming around, it's kind of like we were the quintessential garage band. You know, the cops would come around to tell us to shut up! And the folks didn't like it."

Roger was 11 when he started playing guitar, at first an acoustic Harmony, later an electric St. George. "We weren't at the same school, but we met through the 'garage' scene. Actually, it wasn't a garage, it was more like a rec. room," Ric says. "It was in the basement of Roger's parents' house south of Roscoe Boulevard. We were using guitars you could buy back then at Thrifty Drugs for \$29.95. Roger built one of his first guitars, and he played it in the band."

In the late '60s Ric and Roger teamed up with neighborhood drummer Kyle Raven and formed Savage Rose. One of the group's first shows was a party for Country Joe McDonald's dad, who was retiring from his tenure at UCLA. Kyle drummed and ran the strobe lights, and there was no bass, just Ric and Roger playing guitars.

"We jammed on 'In The Midnight Hour' for about a half hour, plus other songs like 'Dirty Water,' 'Pushin' Too Hard' and 'Just Like You.' We played until about four in the morning!" Ric remembers. Later, Roger moved to Point Loma, in San Diego, where he was in a band called Mother's Milk. Roger describes that group as "kind of your basic power trio doing Blue Cheer covers." After Mother's Milk started performing regularly, Ric went to San Diego as the band's singer and colleague. "I grew a beard and looked like a hippie," Ric says. "I used to hang around on the beach and frighten people!" Around this time Ric and Roger started to play the songs they had been writing together.

"When Ric came in we could start using our own songs," Roger says. "The two of us brought in more original material." Ric says, "I developed my chops with them. We did a lot of blues, like Jeff Beck and Jimmy Page. I guess what we were doing had a little more Blue Cheer added to it, you know, the guitars were really turned up. The amps got bigger, and the amps got better."

"He's Waiting"/"Light Bulb Blues"

In late 1972 Ric and Roger wound up back in L.A., after briefly checking out the Northern California scene together, when opportunity came knocking. Literally. Ric, Roger, Kyle and bassist Paul Motter were in Laurel Canyon in a basement room covered with egg cartons, "just banging out some old tunes with some friends of ours," Ric says. "This guy who ran a fanzine, and made and sold records came by. He was delivering pizzas, and he asked us to do a song!

"It was like, 'Hey! Show biz!' Somebody asked us to play! And it really started the whole thing. We figured, here is our chance to follow up and release a record."

The pizza delivery man was Mark Shipper, who published the hilarious but short-lived early '70s fanzine *Flash*, and who released a semi-legitimate album of Sonics material called *Explosives* in 1972. He later wrote the book *Paperback Writer*, a fictional account of the Beatles. Shipper encouraged the band to do the Sonics' seminal tune about Satan, "He's Waiting," and the Shadows of Knight's "Light Bulb Blues" as the first single for Plug N' Socket Records, distributed by his own Buckshot label. "I guess we got in a little debate with him right away," Ric explains. "Our concern at the time was that we didn't want to do covers continually, no matter how obscure they were! We wanted to do our own material."

But Shipper did get the Droogs into a studio to cut a record. After all, as Ric says, "this wasn't Warner Brothers waving a contract at us, it was just a pizza man asking for a favor! And we dug it, that first L.A. experience! I guess we were looking for something to push us in some direction."

That direction led them to Rockin' Ron Weiser, whom Ric describes as "one of us." Weiser released a voluminous amount of rockabilly records on his Rolling Rock label in the early '70s, building up an incredible market in Italy, his birthplace. "That's what struck us

about it all, it just seemed so D.I.Y.," Ric says. Weiser helped launch the careers of Ray Campi, Billy Zoom and the Blasters. The Droogs' first single was recorded at Rockin' Ron's "Rancho del Elvis," in his Studio City living room, during the summer of 1973. The result was a perfectly inspired, out-of-time garage masterpiece.

"It wasn't our idea to do the 45, Mark Shipper was there prodding us on to play this music," Roger says. "I wouldn't say he was trying to control us, but he had this idea of what was right for that time, and what would be really popular. He always encouraged us to keep playing a style of music that was great, though!"

"Set My Love On You"/"I'm Not Like Everybody Else"

Bassist Paul Motter split after "He's Waiting," and Kevin McManus replaces him on the Droogs' next disc, produced by Shipper at Silvery Moon Studio in early 1974. In a compromise between Shipper and the band, the A-side, "Set My Love On You," was an Albin-Clay original, while the B-side sported an excellent arrangement of "I'm Not Like Everybody Else," the Kinks' anthem of teen angst. "Set My Love On You" definitely steals the show, and certainly more than proves that Ric and Roger can write songs. Clocking in at a perfect 2:38, the tune has it all, from screaming, lust-filled vocals to bongo drums to one of the craziest fuzz guitar sounds since "Trouble" by The Music Machine. "The speaker was probably breaking up, that was my Fender Princeton Reverb," Roger says. "I bought it in 1966 at Music City in Hollywood at the corner of Sunset and Vine, which was kind of like the big thing back then. So I carted it off and I've had it ever since. Again, it's that 'overdriven' speaker sort of thing!"

The Droogs used to go to parties to get gigs, but according to Ric, "nobody knew what the hell we were up to! It was always like lounge acts, really non-aggressive. You know, someone's having a drink in the corner, and you don't want to disturb them."

But the fun of playing prodded them on. "I think the British Invasion had a big impact in Los Angeles," Ric says. "We formed our own band, and it really was as easy as getting a guitar and starting to play!" The group performed songs by their favorites The Music Machine, Love, the Seeds and the Doors, among others. "One of our early songs was 'Break On Through' without an organ, and that was a really kick-ass version!" Ric says. "Those songs were there, and they were being played on the radio. We just did what we felt we were born to do. But while we were doing covers, we wanted to do our own songs, so for the second record that's what we did for the A-side, a song that really captured what all those other guys were doing." Indeed, "Set My Love On You" sounds like a track off a Pebbles record!



Ric, Roger, bassist Bob Kasey and Kyle, circa 1974

This was 1974, a time when bands were starting to wear makeup on stage. And here were the Droogs, plugging away at The Lollipop Shoppe's "You Must Be A Witch." Roger says, "We were continuing with the '60s when at the time a lot of people were Bowie-esque, futuristic, glitter-rock, and sort of computerish. We used to practice across the street from this ridiculous group called Zolar X, who shaved their heads and wore spacesuits. I haven't heard about them in about 20 years."

Los Angeles in the early '70s was hardly a hotbed of musical creativity, and most local venues like the Whisky-A-Go-Go were booking only major-label acts. "There were a lot of copy bands out there in the 'commercial' sense," Ric says. "We played parties, and we played a few gigs in Hollywood and stuff. We played the Starwood one night, early before the main show started. I think our friends all went down there and crammed the place. We had just switched bass players at the time, so the bassist from Mother's Milk came up and learned the parts. It was pretty good, but it was one in too few."

THE BAND:



ROGER
CLAY
Guitar,
Vocals



JOEY
HOEY
Bass,
Vocals



RICH
ALBIN
Lead
Vocals



KYLE
RAVEN
Drums,
Marimba



"Ahead Of My Time"/"Get Away"

The Droogs and Shipper parted ways around the time of their third single, "Ahead Of My Time." The B-side, "Get Away," was recorded at the same session as "Set My Love On You" and "I'm Not Like Everybody Else." Again, Ric and Roger's desire to perform original material came to a head. "That's kind of why we went in dutch with our management, and started doing original songs, and Plug N' Socket basically became our own label. We ran it as long as we could," Ric explains. "It was a lot of work, and money for us at the time, considering we were broke. Even though it didn't have a great impact at the time, we sent out the singles to guys who are still around now, like Ken Barnes, Metal Mike Saunders and Greg Shaw. Those guys were writing in fanzines and working through their record collections."

Metal Mike saw the band in 1974. "I saw the Droogs play at the Starwood the year their second 45 was out," he says. "It was a weeknight audition night. They were really great except for the fucked-up, too jazzy drumming. Great guitar playing."

The two Albin-Clay tunes on the third single, released in autumn of that year, provide more great vocals and intricate but still stripped-down guitar playing. "Ahead Of My Time," produced by the band, is prophetically titled and includes the sole vinyl appearance of former Mother's Milk bassist Joey Hoey. "Get Away" features an interesting marimba texture and some more great fuzz guitar, courtesy of Roger. "That single was sort of our last shot with Mark Shipper," Ric says. "We had depended on him for a lot." This is a great effort, and what a bargain for only \$1.75, including postage, the going rate for the disc in 1974!

"Overnight Success"/"Last Laugh"

"Overnight Success," I remember writing that song about Sky Saxon's career, it seemed like such a meteoric rise, and I don't think anybody else would have survived it," Ric says. "We wrote the song wanting him to sing it. We had heard he was washing dishes somewhere and couldn't even communicate anymore. But we certainly couldn't offer him anything at the time."

Although the single was released in early 1977, the Droogs had tried to meet Sky earlier. In fact, a group of writers met with Sky at an international House of Pancakes in 1974, when he was a dishwasher at a health food restaurant, to promote the idea of him singing with the Droogs. Rumors of boysenberry syrup running down Sky's beard as he talked nonsensically abound; suffice to say the project never came to fruition. Ah, but the Droogs' time to meet Sky had not yet come, and this is another reason you must keep reading! "Overnight Success," the Droogs' ode to Sky, complete with perfect Sky-esque vocals, also includes some crowd noise from the live Seeds album *Raw and Alive: Live At Merlin's Music Box*. But the B-side is the real killer. "Last Laugh" starts as your basic acoustic/harp ballad with snotty lyrics, then shortly escalates into a guitar/theremin/drum frenzy, and finally fades away, all in two minutes, 21 seconds!

"The theremin is called a 'Sonic Wave,' and I'd seen Led Zeppelin in concert many years ago and I noticed that Jimmy Page was using this thing," Roger explains. "So it cropped up in one of these catalogs, and pretty reasonably too, it was like \$30 or \$40. It really is an instrument. But this isn't a sophisticated model, it only has the tone-generating capability."

Alas, this was the last people heard from the Droogs until the end of the '70s. The band members were living in a house together, and when they had to move out, the Droogs split up. Shortly after the single's release, Kyle joined the insipid, short-lived Kim Fowley project Venus and the Razorblades. That band was perhaps best known for recording a five-minute-long "tribute" to punk, the ridiculous "Punk-A-Rama."

"The music scene in L.A. changed a short time later, and bands like us were up there chopping away every night. It all happened very quickly, but we were not around for it," Ric explains. "We were smashed by the process. We made these records and put them out, we had tried to get gigs, we had tried to keep the band together, the whole nine yards. It was a lot of work."

"It didn't really come around again until venues started opening, and bands like The Last, The Unclaimed, The Plimsouls and The Textones started playing. All of those bands are classic '77 or '78 bands," Ric adds. "We kind of took a break for a while from the music biz as pedestrian as it was. It was a full-time business, and we couldn't handle it. Without the lure of fame and fortune, it was pretty much a done deal."

"The B-side to our fourth single is called 'Last Laugh,' which we felt was really appropriate. We thought those first four singles had some nice songs on them. It just took a few years for all of that to take hold. The fact that they were good songs and that they were effective not only then but in the future really brought us back to the whole thing."

Rhino Records, Psychotic Pineapple and 100 Proof

Shortly after the Droogs began their temporary "retirement" from music, Rhino Records released *Saturday Night Pogo*, an

outstanding collection of Los Angeles new wave bands, including the Winos, the Dils and VOM. "We knew Gary Stewart from Rhino, and they wanted to put 'Set My Love On You' on one of those compilations," Roger says. "It would have been good if they had used more contemporary material." Nonetheless, the four-year-old "Set My Love On You" shows up on the 1978 record sounding just as contemporary as any other song. The next year, Rhino followed up with *L.A. In*, not a patch on *Saturday Night Pogo*. The highlight of that record is the Droogs' "Ahead Of My Time," an appropriate choice considering the song was five years old at the time. The Droogs' picture on the record features just Ric and Roger dressed in the silliest of '70s attire — satin jackets — and the pair looks more like Shaun Cassidy and Tony Orlando than themselves!

"That picture of us on *L.A. In* is awful, it pretty much dates us," Rogers says. "Ric and I were trying to get more work around town as songwriters then. Making a living doing what we enjoy has always been a dream. The band happened after we got some decent songs to work with. We've always had a fantasy about one of our songs making it big." Ken Barnes' 1984 article in the British magazine *Bucketfull of Brains* claims that the pair even tried writing songs for Olivia Newton-John, although Roger vehemently denies this.

Bad fashion statements aside, both compilations served as a sign to help prod the Droogs into playing again. "It wasn't like we were doing it with all these illusions of grandeur," Ric explains. "We thought there would be some kind of reciprocation! If it came in 1979 with that Rhino thing, well, that was fine too. That all kind of lured us back into the whole thing." Also that year a punk band from San Francisco called Psycotic Pineapple released a terrific version of "Ahead Of My Time" as the B-side to their single "I Wanna Get Rid Of You."

"It was a big thrill when Psycotic Pineapple covered 'Ahead Of My Time,'" Roger says. "When they came to town, we went to see them play. We had a real mutual admiration."

The combination of renewed interest in the group and a general return to more straight-ahead rock 'n' roll caught Ric and Roger's attention. "We saw this going on and we said, 'Wait a minute!'" Ric says. "It took us a while to get it all back together, and we went out in a couple of situations in the late '70s under assumed names (including 100 Proof) just to kind of get a feel for it. We figured that name was about as anonymous as we could get! It wasn't us playing as the Droogs. We weren't necessarily playing your '60s classics. It was more original material."

"When we came back into the folds, we did so very cautiously," Ric adds. "We didn't want to step into something that we couldn't be in control of. So when we did start playing again, we were pretty much in control." Indeed, by 1981, the Droogs had revived their name, enlisted a new rhythm section, and were back with fervor.

"As Much As I Want"/"Off The Hook"

The Droogs, with J.R. Krueger on bass and Adrian Foltz on drums, released another single in late 1981. "As Much As I Want" was an Albin-Clay original left over from their 100 Proof days, with the B-side a cover of The Rolling Stones' "Off The Hook." The latter was taped live at Blackies West earlier in the year. "Off The Hook" was recorded by some guy with a cassette player," Ric says. "That was one of those gigs where it was an encore and we just bashed it out."



Ric, Roger, Jon Gerlach and Dave Provost, 1984.



The A-side, while more Knack than Kinks and therefore very different from the Droogs' other material, is a spirited R&B stomper about the variations of relationships, complete with a semi-talking part midway through. "Off The Hook" is a wild version and really captures the feeling of the original, which is one of my favorite Stones songs.

"Only Game In Town"/"Garden Of My Mind"

In mid-1982 the Droogs released another excellent Albin-Clay creation, "Only Game In Town," backed with a terrific cover of Mickey Finn's 1968 sub-classic "Garden Of My Mind." The A-side, an honest, unflattering commentary on the L.A. music industry, managed to get the Droogs a bit of national notice with some college radio airplay in Boston. And then the Droogs attracted some industry attention in their hometown.

"We'd been playing the circuit, getting our name out and doing that fancy footwork," Ric says. "Finally one of those sharkskin suit Hollywood types came up to us, and said, 'Hey, you guys are a big deal, let's put out a record.' To make a long story short, it was as sleazy as it looks! It was worse than you can imagine. He said he had his own club, the lights and the fame. 'You guys are goin' to the top!'"

"At the time, the rhythm section wanted to go with this guy. He was the meal ticket! And Rog, one of the founding members, said, 'Bullshit! Are you people blind here?'" Ric recalls. "We were pretty close to signing the paper. I don't even remember money even being talked about, that's how lured we were. Rog stood up and said, 'Listen to this taped phone conversation I had with this guy.' I listened to it, and him doing that saved us a whole lot of pain. The rhythm section was crushed. So I think we begged them to play this one last time with us at the Music Machine, and we played a really good show."

Roger remembers the story well: "You meet a lot of people who come up to you after a gig and tell you how great you are, what-can-you-do-for-me type of thing. This guy took it pretty far, and had us over for dinner and everything. He had a nice place up in the Hollywood Hills. It finally got to the point where he was stringing us along. He had a letter of intent that he portrayed as not being a binding document, but we found out in our own inquiries that it was. It was a good thing we found out, because he was involved with another band we knew at the time, and they were legally tied up so that they were unable to really do anything. So it's your basic shyster situation. I have this conversation with his assistant that I recorded. It's better on tape, one of those things you'd have to hear!"

Dave Provost, the Paisley Underground and Heads Examined

After rejecting the offer of Hollywood fame, fortunately Ric and Roger persuaded bassist Tom Musick and drummer Adrian Foltz to play just one last show with the band at the Music Machine on Oct. 18, 1981. Otherwise, they may never have met their next bass

player, Dave Provost. The Last and the Textones co-headlined the show, and they were joined by the Unclaimed and the Droogs. Dave, who played with Go-Go Kathy Valentine as bassist in the Textones, had never heard the Droogs before that fateful night. "Dave was playing with the Textones when we met him, and he was getting ready to leave that juncture," Ric explains. "He came up to us at the show, and said he liked us. Later he looked us up and came over, and said he was thinking about leaving the Textones, and that he was kind of out looking."

"Dave's one of those genuine kinds of people, so when he tells you something, you don't wonder if he's for real or not," Ric says. "Dave said, 'Let's do something together!' That was the last time we've ever worried about bassists, or even drummers, for that matter." Besides playing with the Droogs, Dave also joined The Dream Syndicate just as *The Days Of Wine And Roses* was released. Schedule conflicts never were much of a concern. "If anyone can do it, Dave can," Ric affirms. "Whenever we get some place in Europe, and we're tired and trying to find a hotel, Dave's out like a shot. He'll be walking around for three hours, seeing sights. He is really amazing. He has a tremendous influence on the band, whereas a sideman wouldn't. Dave's just got to do what Dave's got to do, and that's okay!"

Dave says that the Droogs "are the most rewarding band I've played with, I really enjoy them a lot." As for how he came to join The Dream Syndicate, Dave explains, "Kendra Smith, the Syndicate's bass player, had quit the day that record came out," Dave says. "So I joined and went on tour with them," both on their own and opening for U2 on their *War* tour. "That was a great tour, U2 had really started to become popular here, and back east they were selling out, and crowds were going crazy. We were just sort of along for the ride."

"Then when we made it to Seattle, the crowd went crazy for us!" Dave remembers. "We got asked back for two encores, and U2 only got one, and they got mad. They also got their equipment vandalized and stolen. It was a weird night!" Dave toured three times with The Dream Syndicate and plays on the band's *Medicine Show* album before quitting that project to become a permanent Droog, as well as a member of numerous other L.A. bands.

"Dave has been a real shot-in-the-arm for the band," Roger says. "He's helped sort out a lot of the things that Ric and I have wanted to do. We've always been a sort of experimental band by nature, in the sense that the production isn't that sophisticated, but we try to do things like what you might have heard on an early Yardbirds record. Using the different textures and what not."

With Dave on bass and former Heaters drummer Phil Cohen temporarily in the folds, the Droogs recorded *Heads Examined*, the

band's first ambitious piece. The four-song, self-produced 12-inch EP was released in 1983 on Plug N' Socket, a full 11 years after the Droogs were formed. "Bompl Records allowed Suzy Shaw to work with us, and she basically handled the distribution for that, which we were really grateful for," Ric says.

Heads Examined opens with "98 Steps," a pure Yardbirds-style rave-up showcasing Ric's excellent harmonica playing. "'98 Steps' is one of those songs that has played really well for us because it's a perennial," Ric says. "It's good for encores, to drop in the middle, or you can open with the damn thing. Had we not done it on the 12-inch, we would have put it on *Stone Cold World*." The record's other original is "Train She's On," a classic pop melody with amusing, sarcastic lyrics and a great keyboard sound provided by the Textones' Frank Morgan. The Droogs also do a bang-up cover of "You Must Be A Witch," and a capable version of "Born To Be Wild." The latter was done for an industry contact because it was his favorite song, and it is the only track on the EP without Dave on bass (Steve Liberty does the honors). Mars Bonfire liked the band's version of the song, and the Droogs got to meet him as a result. And don't forget to check out the obtuse, Andrew Loog Oldham-style liner notes, credited to "Wayne Davis," but actually penned by Ric.

Ric says *Heads Examined* didn't really pay off at the time, but the EP got the band more college radio airplay. "Those original pressings of *Heads Examined* and *Stone Cold World* really set us up for more ambitious recording," he says. "*Heads Examined* was rereleased in France (on the Closer label) with our sixth single ('Only Game In Town' and 'Garden Of My Mind') added. Nobody really said diddy about it at the time, but then when we did *Stone Cold World*, which we really pushed and also toured behind, people were saying, 'I've got *Heads Examined* here, why don't you do some of these songs?' That was our first European tour, basically, the songs from *Heads Examined* and *Stone Cold World*."

Around this time L.A. bands like the Long Ryders, The Three O'Clock, the Rain Parade and The Bangles started repopularizing the '60s-influenced rock 'n' roll that the Droogs had been playing for a decade. Ric says, "We were fortunate to return in a really nurturing environment. All of these bands had heard of us. We put on shows with The Last and the Long Ryders, and we would rent a hall out in the Valley. We'd share the door and each play our set. Those were really good shows, they were local, and it was a community. That's really what kind of saved us from ourselves and our past! We felt a fidelity with The Last. Those guys worked so hard at what they did. They wrote songs, put out records, played gigs, and they got a certain level of recognition as time went on. We really understood the work, and we respected their initiative. We weren't coming out as a revival band, and neither were they. It wasn't like some



In New York: after a show in 1984. Photo by Monica Dee.

commercial, cosmetic showcase. It was people writing their own tunes, and having a desire, basically."

The First East Coast Tour

More than a decade after they were "discovered" in that canyon basement, the Droogs were finally hitting it big, or at least semi-big. *Heads Examined* was being played on college radio stations on the East Coast, and a buzz was starting. They also put together the first really cohesive, competent rhythm section the band had ever had. "Dave needed a good drummer, and it's really important when you have a three-piece that the rhythm section is really tight," Ric says. "So we got Jon Gerlach, who was in the Little Girls. He came to us, and we really liked him. He was great, he stuck to it and we played gigs. It was kind of like L.A. II for us, because we'd done the joints, and now we were doing bigger joints. It was a real turning point for us in the way we approached shows."

Until Dave and Jon joined the band, "we didn't really have that solidity," Ric explains. "We had the record out, it was selling well and being played well on college radio, and it basically gave us a decent point to work from."

The Droogs hit the road in March 1984 to play some shows on the East Coast. "I think it was really a point of departure when we said, 'Let's go, let's try Boston,'" Ric remembers, although he admits the band was nervous. "We went to Boston, New York and Hoboken, we had a long weekend playing gigs. We hovered over Logan Airport for an hour in Boston, waiting for the landing gear. Then we went over to the Rat and it was amazing, the Lyres were opening for us! They had insisted that they open for us! Naturally, we were blown away by the whole thing. Leaving home and finding another 'home' really freaked everybody in the band out."

The Droogs were warmly greeted not only by fans, but by the press as well. Considering California's *BAM* magazine had called 1982's "Only Game In Town" their first single, this appreciation was a long overdue, well-deserved surprise. "Playing in the band is one of the most fulfilling things I've ever done in my life," Ric says. "To put your stuff out there is an experience that you can't just draw up on a graph and say, 'I want this kind of response.' That response comes from actual, regular human beings, not from some huge corporation."

"We were being played on the radio in Cambridge, and it helped when we decided to get out of town and shuck this jive here in L.A. And that's where the fulfillment came."

Fulfillment also came at home in shows with other bands. "The Paisley Underground bands were nice enough to let us join in," Ric says. "I think our sound had come of age, and people said, 'You deserve to be here.' And we admitted it to ourselves. We'd been around for so many years, and we were as up-to-date as you could get at the time! And again, I keep mentioning this, because I don't want this to get lost, writing songs for us has been the key feature. Those songs were living, those songs had to be played. We started to get good at it. That's where we wanted to be for the whole time. So it took us 10 years to get there!"

"The bands who have people out there listening to them have a great deal. Maybe not money, big cars, a future, or that kind of stuff, but they do have something. They have an audience that they can reflect their work on."

Stone Cold World

After releasing their first 12-inch record and going on tour, the next logical step was for the Droogs to record an actual full-length album. The result, the superb *Stone Cold World*, was released in late 1984 on Plug N' Socket. For this project, the Droogs turned over the production reins to Earle Mankey, who had worked with folks as diverse as The Three O'Clock, Concrete Blonde, the Beach Boys and Helen Reddy. Their first project together was the single "Change Is Gonna Come," which was released in mid-1984, backed with a killer version of the Velvet Underground's "Waitin' For My Man," recorded live at Maxwell's in Hoboken, N.J. Given their styles, the Droogs and Earle were a perfect match.

"We knew the guys in the Three O'Clock, and the guys in 20/20 at the time, and Earle had been working with them," Roger explains. "Since he was working in his house, it sort of fit us! The drums were set up in his kitchen, and after we got our basic tracks down, we'd

adjourn to his guest house where we'd work everything out.

"I'd say much of that guitar sound is attributable to these Fender Deluxe amps he had. They were blonde tweed, and they



had this sort of natural distortion. When you crank it up past three, it sounds like a Marshall stack! That sloppy distortion you hear on 'Change Is Gonna Come' is pretty much attributable to that amp." Ric even claims he can hear Earle's loud refrigerator in the background of the song, but it's not apparent to these ears.

For *Stone Cold World*, the Droogs rerecorded two older songs, "Set My Love On You" and "Only Game In Town," and added a live version of "He's Waiting," recorded at the Danceteria in New York. The album opens with "Change Is Gonna Come," a classic Droogs song showcasing Roger's killer, "sloppy, distorted" guitar, and amazingly powerful, even sexy, vocals by Ric. He sounds more confident than ever, without losing any of his characteristic snarl. Wow, what a great song. The redone "Set My Love On You" follows, and while it's great too, I actually prefer its more primal, unrestrained predecessor. The lush "For These Remaining Days" shows the band's more psychedelic edge with a dark subtlety that makes the tune all the more memorable.

"Stone Cold World" and "Mr. Right" have a mid-'80s contemporary reportage about them, and both work very well in the context of the album. "From Another Side" is another great Albin-Clay rocker, and if your toes aren't tapping by now, check your pulse. A mind-blowing live version of "He's Waiting" follows, complete with a strange answering machine message from Danceteria that sounds as if it were recorded by Bela Lugosi. The "soundtrack version" of "Only Game In Town" wraps up the show.

"By the way, there is no 'soundtrack' that 'Only Game In Town' is from," Ric says, because I was dumb enough to ask. "There is a movie called *Only Game In Town*, but it has nothing to do with our song. We just threw that out as a curve ball, calling it the 'soundtrack version,' only because it was different from the single version, that is the really clear answer."

All in all, *Stone Cold World* is an outstanding effort that well combines Ric and Roger's songs with the great support of Dave and Jon's rhythm section. Roger can finally hit his stride on his guitar, well mixing electric and acoustic and creating a fuller sound than on previous recordings.

"Working with Mankey was great, he was very inspiring, and he sort of saved us from ourselves and our bad habits. *Stone Cold World* was a major album for us," Ric says. "We'd drive out to (Earle's house in) Thousand Oaks and work out there for three months, then drive back and go out three months later and do it again. It took on a life of its own, like anything you do that you enjoy. You get to the point that it affects your sleep. I think songwriters like 'putting out a message,' not a clear one necessarily, but something for the times. It's like saying, 'Hey, out there, is this true, or is it just me?' We tried to expand on that original base for the songs on *Kingdom Day*."

Roger, who had produced some of the Droogs' early singles, found he learned a lot from Earle. "All of our early singles were sort of trial-and-error stuff recorded on a four-track, basically in a guy's living room, and it was really inspirational, proving that you don't need 24 tracks!" Roger says. "That's essentially been the basis of our sound, to get that live, sort of 'in-the-room' quality, we never really went in for a lot of overdubs. Well, Earle had us doing some on *Stone Cold World*, we definitely got into more guitar-oriented things. But

there's never more than three guitar tracks going at once."

First European Tour and *Anthology*

By the time the Droogs made it back East in March 1985 they were bonafide media darlings, garnering full-page articles in *The Bob*, *Aquarian* and other alternative publications. *Stone Cold World* had earned them stellar press, exceeded in enthusiasm only by reviews of their live shows. This time the band performed a series of dates over a two-week period, and honed their live act in preparation for an upcoming European tour.

"Our first gigs in Europe, when people were singing along with our songs, that really blew my mind," Ric says. "I've never really recovered from that experience. And for us, you can see the emotional power behind it because it was something that we had done up in the garage and blown out through the mail-order system, and it was right there in front of me. It kind of put the band on a pedestal with a light behind us. There was a tremendous amount of vindication, of course, but that's momentary. This business is not one for people to have vindication as their sole goal. I mean, it works for a particular song or a particular atmosphere, but it can also cause bitterness, and it might stop you from continuing on. We learned from our mistakes and experiences."

When the Droogs first toured Europe in autumn 1986, they finally met one of their original fans, Hans Kesteloo, who runs the Music Maniac record label in Germany. "Hans bought our first record in 1973!" Ric says. "So he's got them all! That kind of stuff, you meet someone like that, and you think, 'Wow, you were in the trenches!'" Hans wanted to release the Droogs' early singles on one LP. At first the band resisted the idea. "When Hans wanted to put out *Anthology*, we were really against it at the time," Roger explains. "We just never thought much of some of those early records, our rhythm section was sort of all over the place. Whatever mystique there was about them, we didn't see it at the time. I've never really figured out why those singles are getting about \$150 on the collectibles market. Some of those we only made 200 of, so they were really limited, maybe that's it." Although *Anthology* didn't see the light of day until 1987, talk of the project started two years earlier between interested fans and writers on the continent. "Going to Europe and seeing all these people singing along to our songs, and slam-dancing to us was an experience this band definitely needed," Dave says.

On that trip, the Droogs met with fanatical response everywhere they played in Norway, Denmark, Holland, Germany and the U.K. "It's understood that the response to us in Europe is a real shot-in-the-arm for the band," Roger says. "Some places are standing-room-only. Ric almost got his teeth knocked out by getting hit in the mouth with the microphone stand! We had a feeling that

being from L.A. is part of the problem. The latest, greatest thing is always coming through for 20 minutes, and if you don't have that buzz on in this town, basically you're ignored. There are a lot of bands who stay together for a long time and do really well, like X have. Maybe they haven't done that well nationally, but they're pretty well known here. There is a certain amount of a fan base after you've been together for about 10 years."

Returning home with a European record deal with Music Maniac for their next project, and the impending *Anthology* in the works, provided the Droogs with a burst of interest and energy to work on new material. "If anything, our first tour of Europe made our music darker and more degenerate," Dave explains.

Sky Saxon and the Cavern Club

In 1986 Sky "Sunlight" Saxon made his long-awaited reentry into music at Greg Shaw's legendary but short-lived Hollywood hangout, the Cavern Club. Sky recorded two albums with lots of help from his backing band Firewall, which included some biggest names in the garage music "business": Rudi Protrudi of the Fuzztones, Rich Coffee and Lee Joseph of Yard Trauma, Shelly Garz of the Unclaimed, Paula Pierce of the Pandoras, Tony Valentino of the Standells and Ric, Roger and Dave from the Droogs. Roger plays guitar and Dave plays bass on a great version of Roky Erickson's "Don't Slander Me" and Ric sings backing vocals on two tracks on Sky's first solo LP of the 1980s, which was also recorded at Silvery Moon Studios, where the Droogs recorded three songs in 1974.

A decade had passed since "Overnight Success," yet Ric and Roger finally got to perform with their longtime hero. "We played a song with Sky Saxon one night at the Cavern Club, just jammed for 20 minutes on a song called 'I Wanna Take You To Bed.' It was kind of like 'Up In Her Room,' part two!" Ric enthuses. "He disrobed, took his pants off, girls were screaming. It was wild!

"We also did a show at the Lingerie, one of our record promotion shows, and he came up and jammed with us, and did a couple of encores! It was cool, he was up there with us, we have pictures! The disillusionments we felt way back when came to some partial resolution. We were playing with The Master! I had a good time with him, but there was sure a clamor around him."

Kingdom Day, Karl Precoda and a record contract at last!

The Droogs did indeed expand on their songwriting following all these experiences. The band returned to Earle's Psychedelic Shack in Thousand Oaks to record *Kingdom Day*, their follow-up to *Stone Cold World*. *Kingdom Day* is darker and heavier than its predecessor, with songs about war, nuclear devastation and drug



Jan, Dave, Roger and Ric in 1987.



With Sky Saxon at Club Lingerie.

addiction. The Droogs' terrific latest single "Collector's Item," backed with "Webster Field," written about a softball field frequented by roadies in the Valley, appear on the disk besides six other originals and one cover, the terrific "Call Off Your Dogs." That tune, written by Peter Case, Jeffrey Lee Pierce and Steven Soles, had just been recorded by the Swedish garage band the Nomads, after Peter Case met them in Stockholm. "All of this came through Dave, he said he had a song for us from Peter Case and those guys," Ric explains. "But we didn't know about the Nomads' version, nor did it really bother us that Peter might have given the song to them and had later given it to us. We and the Nomads once did this co-headlining thing in Stockholm where we all got on stage and did 'Call Off Your Dogs' like a bat outta hell!"

The LP opens with the feedback-infested "Stranger In The Rain," an immediate reminder that three years had passed since *Stone Cold World*. If the Droogs had previously sounded at home somewhere in the late '60s, now their sound was firmly planted in the early- to mid-'70s, ala the Stooges, MC5 and Blue Oyster Cult. For some, the record is too heavy, but the Droogs still sound like themselves. To Ric, "*Kingdom Day* sort of has that apprehensive follow-up album feel. The band wanted to make its personal stand again, we really wanted to capture the band with our original songs. We were probably overzealous, and it took us a long time to get that album out, almost three years." But for diehard Droogs fans, of course, the wait was well worth it.

The best news about the new material was that, after 15 long years, the Droogs finally landed an actual contract with a major independent label, New Jersey-based PVC/Passport. The band announced their deal at a show at the Palomino in North Hollywood, where they featured a special guest, The Dream Syndicate's guitar virtuoso Karl Precoda. Fortunately, for those who missed this spectacle, a fan caught the evening on videotape.

"There was a lot of talk about Karl joining the Droogs, because he was rehearsing with us, and coming to rehearsal with this big, hollow-body guitar. He'd stand up on this table and just start playing!" Ric remembers. "He really worked us into a touring band because he had done that, and he tried to impart this vault of wisdom that he had about getting out there and just knockin' it down. When you see the video of him playing with us, you immediately know the insanity that was accruing at the time. He was really kind of messing with our minds a little bit, breaking down some of the limits that we were creating for ourselves."

"He gave us a lot of live performance ideas so we could expand on our songs when we do them live. The version of 'Stranger In The Rain' with him is probably the best we've ever done. He's in there playing second guitar, and when we explode at the end, which we always do, because the song kind of expands, Karl's in there going crazy, having fun. When we would take things seriously, Karl could always go in there and open it up, which is what I think he did a lot of on the early Syndicate records. You can have one simple song, but you keep opening it up, opening more doors, and the audience gets drawn in. It's still the same song, but you can make it different."

The video documenting the evening is to behold. "Accruing insanity" is an understatement! Karl is wearing a baseball cap over closely cropped hair and he looks like a fraternity brother holding his giant guitar over his amplifier, generating a positively demented

sound. "Karl is really a savvy guy, he went through the business," Ric says. "When we played our first show at the Whisky, the booker for the Robin Trower tour was there, and we did half a set, like at the Palomino, some of our songs like 'Quarry Street,' 'Webster Field,' things like that. It was an ensemble," Ric explains. "The second half of the set was just Karl with the Droogs, and it was like turning on a blast furnace! Our whole complexion just changed, and I remember our booker coming up to us afterward and saying, 'You know, I could listen to those first four songs . . . ' It was just cacophony. I mean, you talk about live, that is live!"

"It's funny, Karl was offered a \$50,000 contract from A&M right after that show," Ric adds. "He didn't take it." Karl quit music shortly after that and he now teaches Shakespearean literature at the University of Virginia.

Karl may have given the Droogs plenty of live performance ideas, but the songs on *Kingdom Day* are purely Ric and Roger. "We've tried writing songs in many different ways," Ric explains. "We start with a germ of an idea and let it build up through the band. Some songs don't make it, and they don't capture the band. The songs that work get treated by the band as live material, and they get recorded after that. Most songs get that live band treatment first, then we go through the recording process, and then they get blown out in a live performance. 'Countdown to Zero' was very much a studio production. We tried that several different ways, and it became a very powerful song live. For that song, Rog gave me a riff, and I think it was during the Challenger thing. It was also right after the Chernobyl accident, so I had this real apocalyptic thing going on!"

PVC lined up a short tour for the Droogs, and the failing label tried to push the band as much as it could. "We did a record promotion once, and they didn't even have the damn record in the store," Roger says. "It was like Spinal Tap or something! It can be demoralizing at times."

"We played Fresno once during the PVC days. It was in an old warehouse, and we had some band open for us doing Bon Jovi covers. The place was run by this guy who told us to call him 'Pops.' They spent all this time doing an elaborate set-up, and he gave us the deli tray and everything. Finally we did our show for about eight people. We had a guarantee, and you can't imagine the overhead on this place. After it was all over, Pops comes over to us and says, 'You guys have some kind of music, some kind of music . . . ' You



know, it was one of those back-handed compliments! And we were like, "Thanks, Pops!" And he said, "Don't call me Pops!"

Kingdom Day had already been out in Europe on PVC when Music Maniac licensed it for release there. PVC arranged for the Droogs to open for ex-Procul Harem guitarist Robin Trower on his national tour. But by the time the Droogs were ready to hit the road for their next tour, drummer Jon Gerlach had gotten married and had a child, so he no longer wanted to tour. Again, the Droogs took this news as an opportunity to start in a new direction.

The Cleveland Period

Dave had met former Pagans drummer Brian Hudson on the Droogs' second trip to New York in 1985. Brian had played with Red Decade, the Kingpins and the Backbones, before relocating to L.A. In 1988 he joined the Droogs, and he played on their album *Mad Dog Dreams*. "We got saved by Brian Hudson. Talk about strength, he and Dave, there's a combination made in hell or something!" Ric enthuses. "To have him come into this band was good for us, it gave us that strength live. He was a great drummer, and he played some great stuff. I think that unit, not to diminish any of the others, was excellent."

"When we look back at those tours with Brian, we see how much fun he had. Just seeing him yell on stage after a third encore, 'Yeah, this is what it's all about!' and to have that memory of Brian in our band is just a really complete experience for us. We've worked with other drummers, but there will always be Brian. We'll always have Cleveland! We played Cleveland, with all those Bic lighters out there. We went out there and just rocked the place. It was Brian from Cleveland, just bashing out songs! Hometown boy comes back! It was just one moment, but in his short life, I think it's important to pass onto people."

Brian died in a car accident in 1990 at age 28, shortly after returning from his second European tour with the Droogs. "When Brian got killed, I couldn't believe it," says his brother and fellow Pagan Mike Hudson. "Brian loved the Droogs, and he always spoke very highly of them. When he died, his wife said all the Droogs called her, left messages, and sent cards." Mike saw Brian play with the Droogs when they opened for Trower. "The Droogs are similar to the Pagans in that they haven't paid much attention to trends, they're just playing rock 'n' roll," he says.

The Droogs toured the Midwest in 1988, and found themselves comfortable on a big stage. "When we were in Minneapolis opening

for Trower, the crowd went for us like you've never seen," Ric says. "People were there for us, and friends of Brian's were there. We knew what we had to do for a Trower crowd, and we did it. You need to have the knowledge and the ability to get up on stage and not fall flat on your face. These people were seriously into parties. They wanted to hear 'Bridge of Sighs,' and that's pretty much what they were coming there for, but we offered them an alternative of a band that they really hadn't heard much about." On this tour, the normally mild-mannered Ric was suffering from sleep deprivation, and he left a roadie by the side of the highway over a cheese steak sandwich.

"Ric hadn't slept in about two days," Dave says. "And all across the country this guy had been talking about how great the cheese steaks were at this place, since he was from Philadelphia." But by the time the band arrived at the famous cheese steak place, Ric had fallen asleep.

"He took us to this cheese steak place off the road somewhere," Ric explains. "And he brought back four cheese steaks and one hoagy! I wanted a cheese steak, so I really got riled up, which I sometimes do on the road, and I took it out on this guy. I had my hopes up, he had my glands salivating! And that's the end of that story!" According to Dave, Ric threw the offender out of the van, leaving him by the side of the road. "We drove for about 100 miles, then we argued for a half-hour before driving back to get him," Dave says. "I just never understood why the guy just didn't get an extra cheese steak," Roger says. "You can get a mystery-meat hoagy anywhere!"

Personnel differences aside, the band was finally getting the recognition they had so long deserved. "We had waited years and years for this kind of thing, and we were in the middle of it, and we enjoyed it," Ric says. "At some point, I think, it became a little bit beyond our control, especially when we were touring and our record company went out of business! You just don't think about that kind of thing happening. But it did, and damned if it didn't happen to us. But that adds to our ability to continue in the face of adversity." Alas, PVC/Passport folded in 1988, just as the Droogs were getting ready to record their next album.

Mad Dog Dreams/Want Something and Guerrilla Love-In

After much success with *Kingdom Day*, the pressure to produce another full-length album was intense. So the Droogs headed back to the studio, this time to Hollywood's West Beach Recorders, the main stable for Epitaph recording artists. And instead of Earle Mankey, the band employed Paul Cutler as producer. The resulting album, released in Europe in 1989 as *Mad Dog Dreams*, is unfortunately poor despite good intentions and considering the Droogs' potential. Almost all of the songs are covers, and I find the production quality absolutely abysmal and totally unnatural. They hardly sound like the same band. With the exception of the title song (an Albin-Clay original, and one of only three on the record) there isn't much on *Mad Dog Dreams* that's half as good as any of the Droogs' previous work.

"We weren't using Earle Mankey, we were using Paul Cutler, and we were using a studio in Hollywood that was a lot more accessible," Ric explains. "There were quite a few people working on the interpretations of those songs. Actually, *Kingdom Day* and *Stone Cold World* are very self-contained. You can put them together on a CD (as Music Maniac did) like they're one record. That speaks for what we were doing at the time."

"I think we'd been exposed, we were opening up a little bit, and we were doing something different. If you don't do that, what's the point? We were really ready for another PVC release, working up songs with Karl Precoda and (The Dream Syndicate's) Steve Wynn. We'd been so self-contained that we were just trying to get out and party a little bit because we'd been brought out. We toured the country, and stuff like that was really horizon expanding. I think much of that record reflects that 'Cleveland period' that I like to talk about! I do like the album a lot, but it has its own furtive problems in doing a lot of other people's material. That was easy for us, but it's not necessarily a full-tilt Droogs album like the other stuff."

The Droogs embarked on another successful European tour in support of *Mad Dog Dreams*, playing dates in Holland, Germany, Yugoslavia, Greece, Norway, Sweden, Denmark, France, Spain and



Roger, Ric, Dave and Brian Hudson in 1989.

Italy. Without an American label since PVC's demise, the Droogs managed to get *Mad Dog Dreams* released in the U.S. on the Skylad label, which, coincidentally, has also since gone out of business. The record, with extra tracks that are unfortunately of similar quality, was released in 1990 as *Want Something*. "Kingdom Day" had been out in Europe on PVC before Hans released it, and there were definite problems with that," Ric explains. "We wanted to avoid that kind of conflict with this record. We wanted to make sure it would be new and exclusive, but up to a point." The CD version of *Want Something* includes "She's Got Everything," a great cover of the Kinks' tune, which appeared on *Shangri-La: A Tribute To The Kinks*, on the Illusion label from the U.K. This excellent number, produced by Epitaph mogul Brett Gurewitz, proves that there still was life left in the Droogs, even if the rest of the record didn't reflect it. Also around this time, the Droogs recorded Steve Wynn's great "Weathered and Torn" for a *Bucketfull of Brains* single. Wynn had given the Droogs that song, and upon hearing them play it in rehearsal, decided to have The Dream Syndicate record it as well. "Weathered and Torn" is a good, fun song, and it features Steppenwolf's Mars Bonfire on keyboards. The band even recorded a video for it, which appears on the Skylad "Slipping Through The Cracks" collection, but the song isn't on either version of the album. "Weathered and Torn" also ends up as the extra track on PVC's reissue of *Stone Cold World*.

"Some results on the last studio record weren't really what we were after, it didn't really have the quality that we wanted," Roger says. "We were trying to get a record out faster. We were really under a lot of pressure, not only from Hans, but from other people we talked to. They said, 'You guys take three years to get a record out, how come?' A lot of interviews in Europe asked that question."

"We got to the point when we decided that they were right, but on the other hand, you can't really rush it. When you're talking about original material, if you don't have the song, you don't have the song," Roger adds. "That's exactly why we did a lot of covers on *Want Something*. Pretty much it is an album of covers. And while they're all in a blues-based vein, they're not our songs. I picked the John Hiatt tune, 'Zero House,' on there. That has worked really well live, we did it in Europe. It was a fun album to do."

If anything, the Droogs were probably out of their element when they recorded the material for these releases, for not much seems very "natural." Both Ric and Roger admit they felt rushed during the project. "It's nice to keep the material fresh and keep it moving around. We're not really locked into any one arrangement of a song," Roger says. "It depends on the audience too. I've gotten the sense a number of times that we weren't really being appreciated, although not at all the shows. Trying to get more out of an audience is important. We're at our best in a live situation. A recording studio is a sterile environment, and it can be difficult to get your true sound across. Part of the problem is that you've got drums in a soundproof room, and you've got these isolated amplifiers, and Dave's sitting there with headphones. It just got a little controlled."

In 1991 Music Maniac released *Guerilla Love-In*, which included the extra tracks from *Want Something*, along with several original songs, but performed with another plethora of guests. The Droogs do "Morning Dew" with the Textones' Carla Olson on guest vocals, and the CD version of the album includes "I Got A Right," from Iggy and the Stooges' pre-*Raw Power* sessions. This record is better than *Want Something*, but it does suffer from similar production problems; still it has its highlights, including "Smoke and Mirrors," "Cruel Highway" and "Long Dark Night." As on *Mad Dog Dreams* and *Want Something*, there are many extra musicians working here, and this takes away from the full impact of the Droogs' sound.

Later in 1991 the Droogs recorded a fine cover of "Hobo" by the Plimsouls for the Danish fanzine *Adventure*. The song also



Ric, drummer Ty Rio, Roger and Dave in 1991.

appears on an Australian tribute to the Plimsouls. "The Plimsouls tribute was fun," Ric says. "Once again, we tried to be a little askew from everyone else out there, and that song came out really great too! I think that's some of my most inspired harp playing!"

Atomic Garage and The Future

After a two-year break from recording, the Droogs released the great, autobiographical "Come Heaven Or Hell," backed with "I Got A Right," on the Greek Hitch-Hyke label in 1993. The band had played an ecological benefit in Greece the year before, with Gary Eaton, the guitar player in the Continental Drifters, on bass. Dave had made a previous commitment to play a country music festival in L.A. "He knew the songs and he learned the set really quickly," Ric says of Gary. "He really got into it, almost to the extent that he's like a charter member, or something!"

Roger says that trip was "kind of like 'old home' week, because Hans there with all the Music Maniac people, and Paul Cutler was there producing (the Greek band) The Last Drive. We went on about four o'clock in the morning. In many of our outdoor conversations at bar-be-cues, with all the drinking, which is what is expected of you at these things, there was a lot of talk about us simplifying, going back to 8-track. It's often surprising how these things turn out, because if you don't give something a lot of time, it sounds just that much more honest. So there's a mistake or two. If the intent and the feeling are right, that's fine." The band obviously took the advice, as "Come Heaven Or Hell" sounds a lot rawer and less produced than the Droogs' last recordings.

Later in 1993 the band released their first Plug N' Socket single in seven years, the originals "TV Man" and "Letter To The Times." The A-side was recorded at Kenzie Studios in North Hollywood, while the B-side was done up in Ric's house. The similarities between the lyrics of "TV Man" and the O.J. Simpson murder case are rather eerie, considering the single came out months before Nicole Simpson and Ronald Goldman were killed. Dave says the single was a "test" for the band, and if so, they pass victoriously. "TV Man" includes great guitar a la the MC5, and it's interesting to pick out the melodies ripped off from songs like "Do You Know The Way To San Jose?" and "In-A-Gadda-Da-Vida!" Listening to both songs gives one the impression that the Droogs are not too fond of the media!

I was thrilled the first time I played this single. After not being terribly happy with the Droogs' last albums, both "Come Heaven Or Hell" and this single were refreshing reminders of this band's greatness.

With some positive response from the last two seven-inch records, Ric and Roger wrote a slew of new songs, which the band recorded in Ric's house. "We made a big deal out of it too, because we said we were going to do it ourselves, and with all original material. I think it works. Songwriting is where we've gotten the most exposure," Ric explains. "There isn't one thing on this record by anyone else, it's all Ric and me, and we're pretty proud of that," Roger adds. The album's first track, "Puzzled Mynds," is filled with tons of distorted guitar sounds from Roger's 1966 Fender Princeton Reverb amp! This is a definite change from the previous studio albums.

"I used something called a Jordan Bosstone, which is this thing you hook onto your guitar," Roger says. "Dave found it. It's sort of a pre-pedal, and it looks really dumb, because it hangs on your guitar. I actually used to have one in Mother's Milk, but someone stole it."

"Guerilla Love-In" is the second tune, perhaps a nod to the Doors, who put "Waiting For The Sun" on *Morrison Hotel*, instead of on

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the album of the same name? This too is a great number, but it suffers from a thin drum sound. "TV Man" and "Letter To The Times" follow, with "For The Roses" and the acoustic ballad "Gold Inside A Shrine" closing the first side. "For The Roses," like many songs on *Atomic Garage*, has a tongue-in-cheek we-won't-be-stopped theme, and includes some of the greatest lyrics on the record. With lines like: "You're in a long line if you follow with fools . . . I never would have come here, baby, if I couldn't just go . . . you know they can kill you, baby, at the amateur show and . . . you're never a prophet in your own part of town," this tune is definitely one of the highlights on the record. Side one closes with the tender lullaby "Gold Inside A Shrine."

"Come Heaven Or Hell" starts off side two with a bang, with the rockin' number "Two-Headed Snake" following. This tune keeps up the same high energy, and it's reminiscent of something you would listen to while cruising around Friday nights because you don't want to go to your high school dance. "Tell The World" is another of my favorites on the record, again with great lyrics, like: "It's never easy for the black sheep of the family to hold their head up in the presence of society." The album winds up with "That Dangerous Year" and another great acoustic number, "Talk Thru The Night," which Roger says was "influenced by a bit o' Irish whiskey." *Atomic Garage*, in all its many moods, tells the Droogs' story far better than these 11,000 words ever could.

"We're quite critical of our creations, and we put a little of that aside for this album," Roger says. "I think when you spend the time writing the material, and not so much time in the recording, that it eliminates much of that studio trickery. What you're hearing is just an 8-track, and I think it's good for where we're at. This album is an honest interpretation of the band. I'd say basically it's me on the music and Ric on the lyrics, but there are times when he comes up with a lurking melody or a good guitar progression. Actually, he's gotten a lot better at it, and a lot of our recent material originates from him.

"It's hard to know what people like about us, though, because we've never really gone in for a 'formula' or anything," Roger adds. "It's always been a guitar-oriented, riff-rock thing. We have our

'ballady' side and our psychedelic side, but it's hard to put those things in a line of progression."

Atomic Garage will be released in Europe in late 1995, with Plug N' Socket handling distribution the U.S. Interested parties can write to the Droogs to obtain a copy of this soon-to-be-legendary record. "Around ever since a long time" is what they say about us in Holland," Ric says. "I like that. It has a nice, autobiographical feel to it."

Write to:
Droogs
Plug N' Socket Records
P.O. Box DH
Van Nuys, CA 91412-1520



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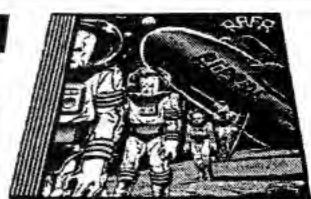
"He's Waiting"/"Light Bulb Blues" 7-inch single 1973 (Plug N Socket Records PNS 001)
 "Set My Love On You"/"I'm Not Like Everybody Else" 7-inch single 1974 (Plug N Socket Records PNS 002)
 "Ahead Of My Time"/"Get Away" 7-inch single 1974 (Plug N Socket Records PNS 003)
 "Overnight Success"/"Last Laugh" 7-inch single 1977 (Plug N Socket Records PNS 004)
 "Set My Love On You" compilation track 1978 (Single from 1974 appears on *Saturday Night Pogo*, Rhino Records RNLP-003)
 "Ahead Of My Time" compilation track 1979 (Single from 1974 appears on *L.A. In*, Rhino Records RNLP-009)
 "As Much As I Want"/"Off The Hook" 7-inch single 1981 (Plug N Socket Records PNS 005)
 "Only Game In Town"/"Garden Of My Mind" 7-inch single 1982 (Plug N Socket Records PNS 006)
 Heads Examined EP 1983
 Track listing: *98 Steps/You Must Be A Witch/Train She's On/Born To Be Wild* (Plug N Socket Records PNSEP 101)
 The Droogs EP 1983
 Track listing: *98 Steps/You Must Be A Witch/Train She's On/Born To Be Wild/Only Game In Town/Garden of My Mind* (Closer Records CL 007/France)
 "Change Is Gonna Come"/"Waitin' For My Man" (live) 7-inch single 1984 (Plug N Socket Records PNS 007)
 Stone Cold World LP 1984
 Track listing: *Change Is Gonna Come/Set My Love On You* (different version from 1974 single)/*For These Remaining Days/Stone Cold World/Mr. Right/From Another Side/He's Waiting* (Live in NYC)/*Only Game In Town* (soundtrack version) (Plug N Socket Records PNSLP 1001; 1985: Making Waves SPIN 117/UK; includes "Waitin' For My Man" bonus track; 1988: PVC 6919 includes "Weathered and Torn" bonus track)
 "Silent Night" compilation track 1984 (on *A Midnight Christmas Mess*, Midnight Records MIRLP 106)
 "Collector's Item"/"Webster Field" 7-inch single 1986 (Plug N Socket Records PNS 008)
 Anthology LP/CD 1987
 Track listing: *He's Waiting/Light Bulb Blues/Set My Love On You/I'm Not Like Everybody Else/Ahead of My Time/Get Away/Overnight Success/Last Laugh/As Much As I Want/Off the Hook/Only Game In Town/Garden of My Mind* (Music Maniac MMLP 005/Germany; CD includes *Heads Examined*)
 Kingdom Day LP/CD 1987
 Track listing: *Stranger in the Rain/Quarry Street/Call Off Your Dogs/Jack of Trades/Kingdom Day/Webster Field/Collector's Item/When Angels Fall/Countdown to Zero* (PVC LP/CD8956; Music Maniac MMLP 011/Germany; includes lyric sheet; CD includes *Stone Cold World*)
 "Weathered and Torn" 7-inch single 2/89 (split single with Big Dipper, *Bucketful of Brains* BOB 22/UK; issue #28)
 "She's Got Everything" compilation track 4/89 (from *Shangri-La: A Tribute to The Kinks* Imaginary ILLUSION 003/UK)
 "San Quentin" compilation track 1989 (from *Gimmick*; Music Maniac MMLP 023/Germany)
 Mad Dog Dreams LP/CD 11/89
 Track listing: *Paper Dolls/We All Fall Down/Zero House/Reach the Dawn/Devil Left to Pay/I Want Something/Echo of an Empty Heart/Wings of Mercury/Mad Dog Dreams/98 Steps/I'm Not Like Everybody Else/Change Is Gonna Come* (Music Maniac MMLP 026/Germany; *CD has three bonus tracks recorded live in Malmo, Sweden, Oct. 14, 1988)
 Want Something LP/CD 1990
 Track listing: *Other End Of Town/Zero House/Maria/Long Dark Night/Paper Dolls/Echo Of An Empty Heart/I Want Something/Reach The Dawn/Devil Left To Pay/Wings of Mercury/County Line (instrumental)/Mad Dog Dreams/She's Got Everything/We All Fall Down* (Skyclad (not)PVC 75; CD has three extra tracks)
 Live In Europe EP 1990
 Track listing: *Countdown to Zero/Long Dark Night/Paper Dolls/Jack of Trades/98 Steps/Zero House* (Music Maniac MMLP 037/Germany; limited edition, with free guitar pick)

"Other End of Town" compilation track 1991 (on *Son of a Witch* Skyclad MICKLE 96)
 Guerilla Love-In LP 1991
 Track listing: *Maria/Cruel Highway/Other End of Town/Smoke and Mirrors/Saints of Mexico/Tempt Me/Morning Dew/Long Dark Night/Close To The Sun/County Line/I Got A Right* (Music Maniac MMLP 041/Germany; *CD includes bonus track)
 "Hobo" compilation track 8/92 (on *Seventh ADventure* Guiding Lights JEWEL 7/Denmark; *This Ain't The Plimsouls: It's Just A Matter of Time*, Zero Hour/Australia)
 "TV Man"/"Letter to the Times" 7-inch single 1993 (Plug N Socket PNS 009)
 "Come Heaven or Hell"/"I Got A Right" 7-inch single 1993 (Hitchhyke LIFT 7002/Greece)
 DUE IN 1995:
 Atomic Garage LP/CD 1995
 Track listing: *Puzzled Mynds/Guerilla Love-In/TV Man/Letter To The Times/For The Roses/Gold Inside A Shrine/Come Heaven Or Hell/Two-Headed Snake/Tell The World/That Dangerous Year/Talk Thru The Night* (Record Runner, Europe/Plug N Socket, U.S.)
 DUE IN 1996:
 "Out Of The Question" compilation track (on Sky Saxon tribute LP, Dogmeat Records/Australia)
 Also: "Weathered and Torn" is on "Slipping Through the Cracks. An Uprising of Young Pacifics" Skyclad video

Only Game In Town



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D I S T R I B U T E D B Y M O R D A M



Christian Amheiter is the only original member of the Hates, although the band has been around since 1978. Many people, myself included, who had stumbled across some of the band's early recordings assumed that they had long broken up. In reality, nothing could be further from the truth! More on that later, but first let's start at the beginning.

Born in Panama, Christian lived in Seattle until moving to Houston when he was in the sixth grade. By 1976, 19-year-old Christian was regularly checked out the import section at local record stores. Influenced by weird early '70s British "spacerock" like Hawkwind and Gong, Christian began reading in British papers about the new music being dubbed "punk rock." He started picking up stuff by the Damned, Sex Pistols, Radio Birdman, the Viletones, and the Clash, and became a big fan of punk rock. Meanwhile, fellow Houstonite Robert Kainer, also influenced by similar music, was doing a college radio show called "Destroy All Music," that featured avant garde and punk music. The show was co-hosted by Dale Brooks, who was also shooting punk rock shows on video, and would later become the Hates' producer. Christian would often show up as special guest "Rocky Cementhead," spinning the latest Brit-punk imports. Around this time, Christian also took up guitar, and decided he wanted to form a band. Christian, Robert and Dale had seen the Ramones play in Houston, and that was a catalyst.

"It was at a terrible place called Liberty Hall," recalls Dale. "They did a two-night stand, and we were the only ones there! There were two rows of folding chairs, and we sat in the front row, and the Ramones just blew us away! So, we had to come back the next night, and I videotaped them." Another huge influence was seeing the Sex Pistols on their only American tour in 1978. "A few months later, we got to see the Pistols," says Dale. "A friend of ours, Paul Minot, who's been my co-producer on the last three Hates recordings, got us the tickets, and we drove up in Christian's car. It was astonishing, a hailstorm of debris. Every time something hit the floor, it got picked up and thrown back in the air - bottles, cans, anything. The Pistols, they loved it! And I remember getting stepped on by Annie Leibowitz, who was taking pictures."

Soon afterwards, Christian and Robert decided to form the Guyana Boys Choir, with Christian handling vocal and guitar duties, and Robert taking up the bass, and the moniker "Bob Dilemma" in the process. Mike McWilliams joined on drums, and the Hates were born.

"What was really neat about punk," Christian says, "is that anyone could pick up an instrument and learn how to play." After Mike left at the end of 1978, Christian and Robert hooked up with drummer Glen Sorvisto. They met him through an ad they put up at local record stores. Glen was still in high school, and came recommended by the local musician union. He joined the Hates simply because it seemed like fun.

At this time, there were basically two other Houston punk bands: Really Red and Legionaries Disease. In 1978, The Hates became the third, even though there really was no place for punk bands to play. There was one club in Houston's "bohemian" district that the owner wanted to be a regular Top 40 rock club, but was such a hole-in-the-wall that no-one would play there except for punk bands. Some of the bigger "rock clubs" occasionally booked bigger name punk acts, like the Ramones and Iggy Pop, but wouldn't let real punks into the shows because of a strictly enforced dress code that disallowed jeans (especially ripped jeans!) and leather jackets, thereby excluding most punks! Houston, as you can probably tell, was a pretty conservative place. People there didn't take too well to this new music.

"Some of the worst critics and unaccepting people were the hippies," Christian says. "Supposedly these open-minded people, they all hated the whole punk rock thing." Later that year, the Hates appeared on the compilation EP *Rather See You Dead*, along with Legionnaire's Disease and Really Red.

In July 1979 the Hates recorded and released their first seven-inch EP, simply entitled *The First Hates Recording*. It was produced by Robert, and recorded "live" in three hours. They released it on their own Faceless Records label, in a run of 1,000 copies with a simple black-and-white cover that Christian made by taking an inkpad roller, drawing "Hates" in big letters on the front. They distributed it through whatever means they could. Among the four songs on this debut release was the classic "No Talk in the '80s," a song Robert wrote about technology replacing direct human contact. Normally, Robert sang the song live, but on the record, the vocals were handled by Christian. The EP also has Christian's commentary on white folks trying to play "funky black music," called "All The Whites Are Going Negro." The band also put out a comic book to promote both the band and the record.

The Hates continued to play whatever shows they could get, heading back into the studio in December to record *The Second Hates Recording*. This time, they only pressed up 500 copies of another four-song EP. By late 1980, the first line-up of the Hates had disintegrated, with Robert moving to Austin, and eventually taking a job as a computer programmer in Boston. Glenn left Houston to attend an out-of-state college. While Christian began looking for a new rhythm section to become the new Hates, he released a very limited edition EP (25 copies!) of songs leftover from the first two Hates sessions.

Determined to keep the band going, Christian soon enlisted a new rhythm section consisting of his pal Paul Minot on bass and Lawrence Baker on drums. This line-up recorded *Pancea* in 1981, also known as



Hates 1978, opening for Wreckless Eric at the Palace: (l to r) Robert Kainer, Christian Amheiter, Glenn Sorvisto. Photo by Lisa Wilson.



Hates 1993: (l to r) Christian, Dave Deviant, Screech.

the fourth Hates recording, released again on Faceless, this time as a 12-inch record. By this time, the Hates had become a tighter, and faster trio. The record so impressed a guy in Germany that he wrote to Christian and asked if he could release the record on his label in Germany. His only stipulation was that the tape be remixed, with the guitars brought up in the mix. Christian agreed, and remixed the session, sending the guy a master tape only to never hear from him, or the label, again! As far as he knows, the record never came out in Germany. Soon afterwards, this line-up of the Hates dissolved as well. Christian, who was by now making his living as a waterworks engineer for the City of Houston, considered the band a sideline thing, but still wanted to keep the Hates name alive.

In 1985, the Hates released their fifth recording on cassette-only format. It featured the bass, and vocal talents of Kansas City native Donne on "Nadie," "Too Many Apples" and "No One To," which she

wrote and sang on. The Hates' drummer at this point was Gary McClatchy. The line-up lasted about two years. Christian enlisted Ted "Buzz Lux" Barwell on bass and David "Dynamite" Jette on the drums to play and record the sixth Hates recording. Another DIY cassette, *Xenophobia* was released in 1988, and contained eight more Hates originals, such as "You're A Mess" and "Sex Toy." For this recording, Christian brought in Dale Brooks to do the production work.

"I got some studio time in barter for some work I had done," says Dale. "So I said 'Hell, let's record the Hates!'" Dale has produced all the Hates recordings since, and has also shot a variety of videos of the band. A tape Dale sent has footage of the band in 1978/79 (including their excellent video for "Bother"), some mid-80s videos, and live-in-studio footage of the most recent Hates line-up.

By 1992, the Hates had changed again. Eric Andrews (bass) and John Hawkins (drums), both high school students, had joined and the band recorded the seventh Hates recording, *New World Oi*. By this time, the Hates had become blisteringly fast, without sacrificing melody, but somehow creating a louder and almost chaotic sound that easily rated up there with the best of some of the current punk/hardcore crop. "Plated with a metallic sheen and hurricane melodies" is how Christian describes what would become the Hates best known, and received release thus far. The tape, recorded in two weeks at Paul Minot's newly built Millipede Labs studio in Austin, contained great songs like "Down and Out," "Teenage Psychopath," "Degenerate" and many more. It was also the first Hates material to be recorded on multitrack, as all the previous recordings had been done on a primitive four track machine. The tape received a positive review in *Flipside* magazine, which prompted Ehret of Bullet records (another German label) to write and ask Christian if he could release the tape as a CD in Germany. Strangely enough, Ehret didn't realize that the Hates had been around for so long, and upon hearing their other material, suggested to Christian that he put some of that on the CD as well. Entitled *Contamination Disc*, this 1993 CD has all of the *New World Oi* on it, as well as those first four Faceless releases, from the first EP to *Panacea*, all digitally remastered by Dale. Christian also got a chance to finally use the second mix of *Panacea*, originally slated for that German record which never came out, as it this mix which appears on *Contamination Disc*.

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Road-E-O Prize Winners Announced

The top prize winners have been announced for the Sertoma Bicycle Safety Road-E-O held last Saturday at Blaine Junior High School.

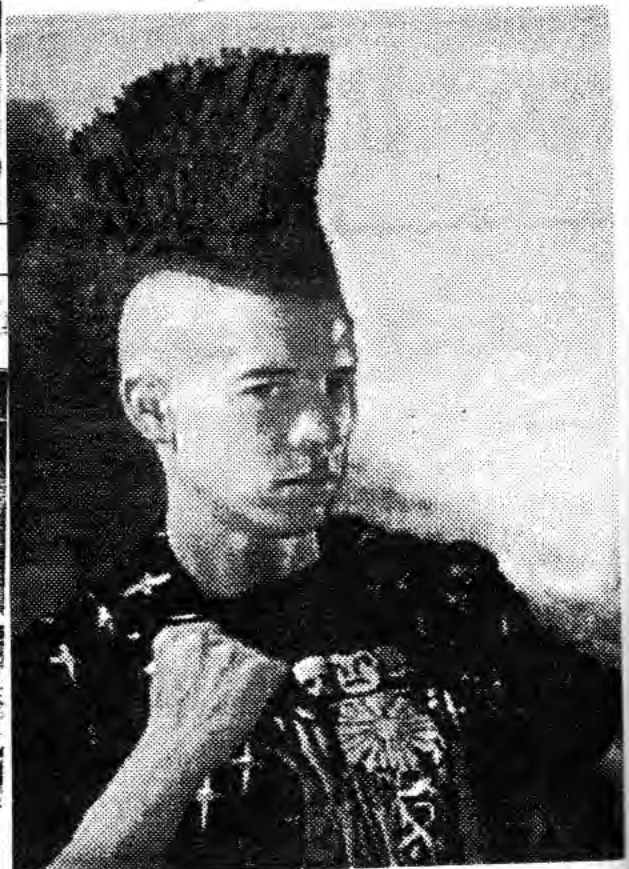
Awarded first place ribbons were: Christian Arnold, Jr., Lawton School; Jean Severyns, Magnolia School; Richard Gere, Magnolia School; Debbie Lynch, Magnolia School; Gary Salonska, Magnolia School; Heather Ramsey, Magnolia School; Michael Lewis, Lawton School; Gabriella Brunette, Lawton School.

The Road-E-O was sponsored by the Sertoma Clubs of Seattle, with the cooperation of the Seattle Public Schools, the P.T.A., the Seattle Police Department, and the Seattle-King County Safety Council.

Assisting in the conduct of the Road-E-O were several Girl Scouts of Troop 1519 from Lawton School. Their work in this project will help them earn a badge for cycling, according to the leader, Mrs. Robert Olson.



TOM BLEARNEY PRESENTS prize winning ribbon to Gabriella Brunette in the local Sertoma Club Bike Road-E-O at the Magnolia Recreation Center. Jack Keller, another Sertoma official, lines up other winners, Christian Arnold and Gary Salonska.



That same year, Christian again revitalized the Hates with new members Dave Deviant (then 21) on bass and Screech (then 17) on the drums. This line-up recorded and released their *Texas Insanity* cassette, again engineered, mixed and produced by the Minot/Brooks team. Christian feels that this tape "Presents a more Tex-O-Centric view of Hates topics, with emphasis on the new (dis)order and other post-cold war illusions."

The latest Hates project has been the *Greatest Hates* CD, much of which was recorded over the last year and a half. The CD contains new songs, rerecordings of some older Hates material, some previously unreleased demos from 1978, and radio interviews with Christian. A few ex-Hates even make appearances on the new material. The CD provides an excellent overview of the Hates sound, from melodic, almost "pop" sounding material to balls out speedy punk. At present, the Hates are working on new songs, and recording some of their live shows. Christian says, "It feels great to still be around after all this time!"

Hates Discography:

First Hates Recording 7-inch EP, 1979 (Faceless Records 001)
track listing: No Talk In The '80s/New Spartans/All The Whites Are Going Negro/Last Hymn

Second Hates Recording 7-inch EP, 1980 (Faceless 002)
track listing: Do The Caryl Chessman/Soldier/City On Ice/Bored With The Boys

Third Hates Recording 7-inch EP, 1980 (Faceless 003)
Track listing: Not My Kind/Houston/Science's friction/So What (If Your Mother Kicks Me in the Nuts)

Panacea - The Fourth Hates Recording 12-inch EP, 1982 (Faceless 004)

Track listing: Houston/Nuclear Age/Science's Friction/Also Watched/Punk 1301/This Year's Model/What Am I Living For?

The Fifth Hates Recording cassette, 1985 (Faceless 005)
Track listing: Nadie/Puppet Citizen/Too Many Apples/Society Crisis/No One To

Xenophobia - The Sixth Hates Recording cassette, 1988 (Faceless 006)

Track listing: Sex Toy/Junkyard Gang/You're A Mess/Neo-Tyranny/Xenophobia/Mad Neighborhood/Reign Of Terror/Angry New World Oi - The Seventh Hates Recording cassette, 1992 (Faceless 007)

Track listing: First Strike/Teenage Psychopath/Hotspot/Outside The Law/Another War/Shut Up/Junkyard Gang II/Dead Or Alive/Yankee Juggernaut/Apathy/Degenerate/Raw Meat Cleave Contamination Disc CD, 1993 (Bullet Records Bang!3)

(includes EPs 1-3, remix of Panacea, and New World Oi)
Texas Insanity - The Eighth Hates Recording cassette, 1993 (Faceless 008)

Track listing: Breakout/Rich Man's Government/Fashion For The Poor/Population Explosion/L.A. Riot/Rebel/Class War/Conspiracy/Tainted World/Texas Insanity/Untamed/Mercenary Plan/Quit Ripping Off/No Parole/Self-Destruct

Greatest Hates CD, 1995 (Faceless 009)

Track listing: Bother (1978 demo)/Parallax/New Spartans/Also Watching/Science's Friction/The Living Dead/Sex Toy/Bored With The Boys/Degenerate/Punk 1301/Society Crisis!/Down and Out/So What (If Your Mother Kicks Me in the Nuts)/Xenophobia/Mad Neighborhood/Reign Of Terror/City On Ice/Houston/Dub Neighborhood/Interview #1/Houston (1980 demo)/Interview #2/Science's Friction (1980 demo)/Interview #3/No Talk In The 80s (live 1978)

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MIA HAD SHORT, DYED BLACK HAIR, AND WAS DRESSED IN CUT-OFF JEANS, BOOTS AND A DARK HOODED SWEATSHIRT. SHE WAS PROBABLY WEARING SMALL HEADPHONES. evil atid

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A scene from the film's surprise ending.



It's macramé!

When we first saw Russ Meyer's *Beyond the Valley of the Dolls*, we had little idea how it would impact our lives. From its opening scene, featuring an all-girl garage band, to its sappy morality play at the end, this film is not to be missed by anyone with a twisted sense of humor.

Beyond the Valley of the Dolls was Meyer's first (and only, natch) big-budget film, made for 20th Century Fox in 1970. Movie critic Roger Ebert co-wrote the screenplay with Meyer, and the film stars ex-Playboy Playmates Dolly Read, Cynthia Myers and Marcia McBroom as Kelly McNamara, Casey Anderson and Petronella Danforth, who are members of a band called "The Kelly Affair," and all of whom are suited to Russ Meyer movies, if you know what we mean. In the opening seconds, the band, along with manager Harris (David Gurian, an amazing Greg Brady look-a-like), pack up their van and head for Los Angeles following a fairly lukewarm gig at the Westmount High School prom in some no-name town back east. The song they perform, "Find It," is one of the most insane tunes we have heard in a while. We can't believe no band (as far as we know) has ever covered it. From its opening scream to the fuzzed-out guitar and snotty lyrics about bein' a girl, well, it's just a great song, people, trust us.

"Find It"

copyright 1970 20th Century Fox Music

Open my eyes to lunatic skies
Of red destruction,
Sunrise and morning,
Empty out my head

I've got to find a direction to follow
Something that's mine
Not something I borrow
Each day I wait,
Heavy's the weight on me

Chorus:

Find it
I've got to find it
Get me behind it
Someplace for me
Find it
Find it
Find it
Finally let me

I need release from wanting you
You don't satisfy me enough today
Time is too near
When I will be gone away

Wearing the color of bright crimson
Dressed in a long, black wedding gown
I've got to find my answers
On my own

Chorus (repeat)

I turn my eyes to lunatic skies
Of red destruction
Sunrise and morning,
Empty out my head

Chorus (repeat to end)

But anyway, back to the "plot." As Harris, Kelly, Pet and Casey are driving toward LA, a map image appears over the screen and the gang is singing a song that is actually called "Come With the Gentle People." With lyrics like, "Come with the gentle people, spread love across the land, come with the gentle people, we're the only ones who understand..." how can you miss? Considering we're only about five minutes into the film at this point, one can't help but wonder if Meyer blew half of his budget in the opening scenes. When the gang finally pulls up at a motel in LA, Kelly is off to find her long-lost rich aunt Susan, who inherited all of the family's fortune after Kelly's mother was disowned.

Susan, played by Phyllis Davis, is a fashion designer who caters to the jet set, and has a really sleazy lawyer (sorry, a little repetitious) friend, Porter Hall. Stuffy old Porter thinks that Kelly and friends are freaks (and he lives in LA?), and tries his hardest to screw everything up. There are other amazing characters such as Lisa's favorite, Ronnie "Z-Man" Barzell (John LaZar), promoter and party-giver extraordinaire, who ends up giving the girls their new name, the Carrie Nations, thus catapulting the band to stardom. Alan's favorite is, of course, Ashley St. Ives, the curvy sexpot played by Edy Williams. Then there's Lance Rock, played to utter mindless perfection by Michael Blodgett. One part gigolo, one part drug addict, he learns the hard way that bed-hopping only leads to trouble. Tsk, tsk. And who can forget Randy Black, smooth talking heavyweight boxing champion who goes berserk? Also be on the look out for look out for Charles Napier as Baxter Wolfe, who previously appeared as a singing hippie alien on a weird episode of *Star Trek*.

No doubt about it, *Beyond* is one crazy and very entertaining flick. You get to see the girls "perform" some great, kitschy songs. A word of caution, though. The soundtrack LP of this movie does not have the same versions of the songs in the movie, and many are inferior. Of course, no wigged-out late '60s flick would be complete without an appearance by a washed-up "psychedelic" band, and in this one it's the Strawberry Alarm Clock! See them mime to their only big AM radio hit, "Incense and Peppermints," and new, more "current" sounding songs like "I'm Coming Home." *Beyond* has everything you need, and want in a movie: comedy, sex, romance, violence, and even a surprise ending. Do yourself a favor, and buy, or rent, a copy of this incredible movie today. On a related note, *Double Agent 73*, with Chesty Morgan (the "73" refers to her bust size . . . really!) makes an appealing double feature. This ridiculous piece of celluloid has Morgan as "Jane," a secret agent with cameras installed in her breasts! This must be seen to be believed, trust us. Morgan appears to be positively narcotized during the entire film, but one shining moment has her untrustworthy boyfriend asking her to marry him. Her response? She shoots him right between the eyes. Boy, feminists would have a field day with this one!



Alan and Lisa's Top 5 Exclamations from "Beyond the Valley of the Dolls"

1. "This is my happening, and it freaks me out!"
2. "At least it's not a uniform worn by freaks!"
3. "That's really gettin' it together!"
4. "You're a groovy boy, I'd like to strap you on sometime!"
5. "Son of a bitch, get the hell outta there!"



The Carrie Nations perform. No band is complete without headbands.



Lance Rock and Kelly.



One of several really weird-looking folks in this film.

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SHAM 69



"If the kids were united, they would never be divided!" was the rallying cry for Sham 69 fans worldwide in 1978. The hard-edged, street-wise Oi!/punk sound of these young British lads made them one of the most popular – and deservedly so, I might add – bands of the whole 1977 punk rock explosion.

Sham 69 were formed in 1976 by singer Jimmy Pursey, who met some other musicians while working at the Wimbledon Greyhound Station in Hershaw, South London. The original line-up for the band consisted of Jimmy on vocals, plus Neil Hams on lead guitar, Johnny Goodfomthing on rhythm guitar, Albie Slider on bass, and Billy Bostik on drums. They took their name from some graffiti painted on a wall that read, "Hersham 69," but the "her" part had faded away. Influenced heavily by the Small Faces and Gary Glitter, they worked up a strong, tight pubrock style set of covers and a few originals, mostly written by Pursey and reflecting his working class roots. In the first live review of Sham 69, Julie Burchill from *NME* wrote, "Sham 69 play rock 'n' roll in the manner that American Negroes fight: not for fun, but for existence."

By June 1977, Pursey had ousted Bostik, Hams and Goodfomthing because of the usual "musical differences." He replaced them with Dave Parsons on guitar and Mark "Dodie" Cain on drums. Only he and Slider would remain from the original group. Pursey and Parsons soon formed a songwriting alliance, penning numbers like "Borstal Breakout," "George Davis Is Innocent" and "Let's Rob A Bank." Mark Perry, then editor of the seminal punk fanzine *Sniffin' Glue* heard the new Sham 69 and became a huge fan. He soon released the band's debut record on his and partner Danny Baker's newly formed Step Forward label. "I Don't Wanna" b/w "Ulster" and "Red London" came out as a seven-inch and a 12-inch release, with picture sleeve for both, in October 1977. Shortly thereafter, Albie Slider quit, and was replaced by Dave "Kermil" Treganna.

This would become an even better, and more cohesive Sham 69 line-up than previous, due to Treganna's strong bass skills. A publicity stunt was arranged for them to play on top of a building near the Vortex club, but this was quickly halted by police. Besides, the Beatles had already done this sort of stunt in 1969. (*Yet that didn't stop U2 from pulling it 10 years later –ed.*) The band was also starting to gain a large right-wing skinhead following, one which would dog them for the rest of their careers. In October 1977, they appeared in a TV documentary about the "new wave," where they played two songs and Mark Perry was interviewed. The show was never broadcast publicly, only on a closed-circuit TV broadcast of public schools in London!

This publicity did work, strangely enough, as someone at Polydor records saw the show and thought that they could have the same sort of success with Sham 69 as they'd had with the Jam. Sham 69 signed with Polydor, and released a one-sided promo single of "What Have We Got," a crunching football-chant inspired number. Their second single would be "Borstal Breakout" b/w "Hey Little Rich

Boy." Both songs would end up on Sham's debut album, *Tell Us The Truth*, released in February 1978. The LP featured one side of studio material, all of which are classic punkers like "Tell Us The Truth" and "Whose Generation!" The second side showcased their live sound with a selection of well-recorded concert tracks like "Rip Off" and "They Don't Understand." Their next single was the incredible "Angels With Dirty Faces" b/w "Cockney Kids Are Innocent," which became a Top Twenty hit. Meanwhile, "bootboys" continued to follow the band, going so far as to disrupt a "Rock Against racism" gig that Sham played with Elvis Costello that year.

Trying to counter the ridiculous violence being incited by brutish idiots, Sham penned and recorded a rallying cry to "join together" punks, mods, skins, etc. with the song "If The Kids Were United." Unfortunately, their call for an end to divisions with the punk scene went mostly unheeded. Three months later, they were back with "Hurry Up Harry," a joking poke at Cockney lifestyle and "going down the pub." It became a hit with boozers everywhere! In the fall of '78, they unleashed their second LP, *That's Life*. Basically a concept album, the record features strong street-rock tunes, linked together by a well-acted dramatization of life within a lower working class cockney family. The protagonist of the story, a young English



circa 1977

chap, still lives at home with his family. He goes out boozing, is late for work, gets "the sack," ends up on the dole, tries to pick up "birds," picks a fight, crashes a car. The songs are great, especially "Everybody's Right, Everybody's Wrong" and "Is It Me Or Is It You?"

Still, the mindless hooliganism that hampered their live gigs made it increasingly clear that a faction of Sham's fans had no idea what the band was singing about. In January 1979, Sham played a gig at Middlesex Polytechnic, and were completely disrupted by troublemakers. Jimmy ended the show in tears, calling for an end to the ridiculous violence. Rumors began to circulate that Sham had split. One more single came out, the excellent "Questions and Answers" b/w "I Gotta Survive/With A Little Help From My Friends." Things were not going well, though, and Sham 69 split up. No one seems sure what exactly happened next. Jimmy took some "vacation time," but the band soon got back together, although without Mark Cain, who'd been replaced by Ricky Goldstein. The band got down to work on what would be their crowning achievement, the *Adventures of Hersham Boys* album. It featured different versions of the A-sides of the last two singles, plus a scathing version of the Yardbirds' classic "Mister, You're A Better Man Than I."

"Mister" too was released as a single, but didn't fare too well on the charts. The album was also released as a limited gatefold sleeve with an extra twelve-inch single featuring long, jammed-out versions of "If The Kids Were United" and "Borstal Breakout." Both are dramatically different from any previous versions.

Pursey also became interested in producing other bands, and ended up producing singles for both the Angelic Upstarts and Cockney Rejects, as well as his brothers band, Kidz Next Door. A great fan of the Clash, he also made a few guest appearances singing "White Riot" when the Clash and Sham toured together. You can see Pursey singing with the Clash towards the end of the Clash movie from 1979, *Rude Boy*.

The last Sham LP to come out was *The Game*, surely their weakest release. Disenchanted by violence at shows and the media's misrepresentation of the band, the lyrics on *The Game* reflected this, but the musical power of before just wasn't there. They sound tired and fed up. Shortly after its release, Sham broke up. Again.

A brief pairing of members of Sham 69 and the two remaining Sex Pistols, Paul Cook and Steve Jones made a few live appearances as Sham Pistols in late 1979, some of which was released on four-song EP in 1988. The band runs through "Pretty Vacant," "White Riot," "If The Kids Were United" and "What Have We Got." Pursey embarked on a solo career, releasing a single and subsequent album for Polydor in 1980 called *Imagination Camouflage*. On it, Jimmy plays guitar and keyboards, and is helped out by two ex-members of Generation X on bass and drums. The sound is not far from Sham 69, although slightly more experimental. Pursey would record two more solo LPs, *Alien Orphan* and *Revenge Is Not The Password*, both of which had him delving more into synthesizer-based pop schlock, about as far removed from Sham as possible. Treganna, Parsons and Goldstein formed the Wanderers with ex-Dead Boys singer Stiv Bators, culminating in the

1980 Polydor LP, *Only Lovers Left Alive* and a couple of singles. Treganna and Bators would soon leave to form the Lords of the New Church, while Parsons went solo then disappeared. Who knows what happened to Goldstein?

In 1986, Pursey and Parsons reformed Sham 69, or rather added a new rhythm section, plus a saxophone player and keyboards, and went on tour. Sounding totally unlike the Sham 69 of before, they even released a couple of new singles and an LP entitled *Volunteers*, despite them using the name, it still wasn't Sham 69. Even subsequent "reunion" tours of Europe and North America had them downplaying old Sham to the point where they refused to play any old numbers at first. Eventually, they added "revamped" versions of some of the old songs, but for a real Sham fan it was all a big, um, Sham!



Sham Pistols circa 1979

Sham 69 Discography:

- "Sons Of The Streets"/"Fanx" 7-inch single 1977 (no label)
- "I Don't Wanna" b/w "Ulster" & "Red London" 7-inch & 12-inch single 1977 (Step Forward SF4)
- "Borstal Breakout"/"Hey Little Rich Boy" 7-inch single 1978 (Polydor 2058.966)
- Tell Us The Truth* LP 1978
- Track listing: *We Got A Fight/Rip Off/Ulster/George Davis Is Innocent/They Don't Understand/Borstal Breakout/Family Life/Hey Little Rich Boy/I'm A Man, I'm A Boy/What About The Lonely/Tell Us The Truth/It's Never Too Late/Whose Generation!* (Polydor 2383.491)
- "Angels With Dirty Faces"/"Cockney Kids Are Innocent" 7-inch single 1978 (Polydor 2059.023)
- "If The Kids Are United"/"Angels With Dirty Faces" 7-inch single 1978 (Polydor 2059.050)
- That's Life* LP 1978
- Track listing: *Leave Me Alone/Who Gives A Damn/Everybody's Right, Everybody's Wrong/That's Life/Win Or Lose/Hurry Up Harry/Evil Way/Reggae Pickup, Pt. 1/Sunday Morning Nightmare/Reggae Pick Up, Pt. 2/Angels With Dirty Faces/Is This Me Or Is This You?* (Polydor POLP-136)
- "Hurry Up Harry"/"No Entry" 7-inch single 1978 (Polydor POSP-7)
- "Questions & Answers" b/w "I Gotta Survive" & "With A Little Help From My Friends (live)" 7-inch single 1979 (Polydor POSP-27)
- Hersham Boys* 12-inch EP 1978
- Tracks: *Hersham Boys/I Don't Wanna/Rip Off/I'm A Man, I'm A Boy*
- *live 1978 (Polydor POS-PX-64)
- "Hersham Boys" b/w "I Don't Wanna" (live) & "Tell Us The Truth" (live), 7-inch single 1978 (Polydor POSP-64)
- The Adventures Of Hersham Boys* LP w/limited edition 12" single* 1979
- Track listing: *Money/Fly Dark Angel/Joey's On The Street Again/Cold Blue In The Night/Hersham Boys/Lost On Highway 46/Voices/Questions & Answers/What Have We Got?/If The Kids*



circa 1979

Were United/Borstal Breakout * (Polydor 5025)
 "Mister, You're A Better Man Than I"/"Give A Dog A Bone" 7-inch single 1979 (Polydor POSP-82)
 "Tell The Children"/"Jack" 7-inch single 1979 (Polydor POSP-136)
 The Game LP 1980
 Track listing: The Game/Human Zoo/Lord Of The Flies/Give A Dog A Bone/In And Out/Tell The Children/Spray It On The Wall/Dead Or Alive/Simon/Deja Vu/Poor Cow/Run Wild Run Free (Polydor POLD-5033)
 The First, The Best & The Last LP w/ ltd. edition live EP 1980
 no track listing available (Polydor)
 "Unite & Win"/"I'm A Man" 7-inch single 1982 (Polydor 2059.029)
 Angels With Dirty Faces: The Best of Sham 69 LP 1986
 no track listing available (Receiver)
 Live & Loud LP 1987
 Track listing: Angels With Dirty Faces/Tell Us The Truth/Questions & Answers/Joey's On The Street Again/Borstal Breakout/Red London/Hersham Boys/That's Life/Poor Cow/Mister You're A Better Man Than I/Money/Poor Cow/White Riot/They Don't Understand/If The Kids Are United (Link Records LP04)
 Live & Loud, Vol. 2 LP 1988
 Track listing: What Have We Got/I Don't Wanna/Rip Off/Angels With Dirty Faces/Everybody's Innocent/Ulster/They Don't Understand/Hurry Up Harry/Voices/Who Gives A Damn/Daytripper/Borstal Breakout/Hersham Boys/If The Kids Are United (Link LP025)
 That's Live 12-inch EP 1988
 No track listing available (Skunx)
 Sham Pistols 12-inch EP 1988
 Track listing Pretty Vacant/White Riot/If The Kids Are United/What Have We Got? (Link 1202)
 Sham's Last Stand LP 1989
 Track listing: What Have We Got/I Don't Wanna/They Don't Understand/Angels With Dirty Faces/Tell Us The Truth/That's Life/Rip Off/Cockney Kids Are Innocent/Voices/Borstal Breakout (Link MLP075)
 The Best & The Rest of Sham 69 Live LP 1989
 No track listing available (Receiver)

Tell Us The Truth/That's Life double LP/CD re-issue 1989 (Receiver)
 The Adventures of Hersham Boys/The Game double LP/CD re-issue 1989 (Receiver)
 The Complete Sham 69 Live LP/CD 1989
 No track listing available (Castle Communications)
 Live at the Roxy LP/CD, 1990
 No track listing available (Receiver)



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EAR PIERCING PUNK

BY ALAN

One of the things I've never really addressed in past installments of this column (previously run in *Cryptic Times*) is punk compilation, or "various artists" LPs. Things that fall under this category often include sampler LPs of artists from a particular label, live records and so forth. Many of these contain different, or rare songs by particular punk bands, making them of interest to all collector types and fans. One of the earliest punk comps. I picked up was the *Live At The Vortex, Vol. One* LP, released on NEMS in 1977 (NEMS 6013). With an "authentic" punk sleeve, this was spotted in the "cheap" bin at a used record store and has been a fave of mine ever since. Side one has the instantly dated "Can't Wait Till '78" by the Wasps, who also turn in a cool version of "Waiting For My Man." Other bands such as the Suspects, NEO and Mean Street turn in decant Anglo-snot, too. A real standout is the Art Attacks who included future punk artist Edwin Pounce a.k.a. Savage Pencil. Since they never recorded much (they lasted less than a year), these two songs are among a handful of recorded documents of the Art Attacks. I also love the Maniacs, whose "You Don't Break My Heart" is a classic. The only real loser tunes on here are by future metal meister Bernie Torme. Like the title says, this LP was recorded live at the Vortex, a London punk club, over two nights in October of 1977. The Vortex closed down after one year, and a volume two never saw the light of day.

Vancouver Independence (Friends Records) is one of two Vancouver punk/new wave compilations to be released in 1979. Aside from a couple of songs each by the Subhumans and No Exit, most of this is pretty throwaway artsy new wave. The other bands, who include Si Monkey, the B-sides, Droogs (not the L.A. band) and Metros are all skippable stuff. Better is the *Vancouver Complication* LP on Pinned records (PIN 7933001). This great comp. contains almost entirely unavailable elsewhere tunes by Painted Sticks, DOA, Private School, Exxotone, Active Dog, Wasted Lives, Subhumans, the K-fels, U-Jerks and No Fun. Both the DOA songs have never appeared on any legitimate reissue, and the two Subhumans songs, although rerecorded later, first appeared on here. Very rare, and very cool!

Saturday Night Pogo has been one of my all-time favorite punk/new wave compilations. Released on Rhino Records in 1978 (RNLP 003), it has a potpourri of great punk stuff, kicking off with the insane garage-trash of the Winos' "Beauty Queen" (recorded in 1973!). There's also great NY Dols style stuff from the Berlin Brats and the Dogs, and proto-hardcore from the Dils ("Mr. Big"). The Droogs' classic "Set My Love On You," although recorded in 1974, is included here, and sounds fine amongst all the other 1977-78 material. Then there's the insane "I'm In



Love With Your Mom" by VOM, who would later mutate into the Angry Samoans. Other tracks by Needles & Pins (girlgroup powerpop), the Low Numbers (crude Sex Pistols-style punk), the Young Republicans (powerpop), Backstage Pass (powerpop) and Chainsaw (more obnoxious punk) are all cool. The only throwaways on this are tunes by the Motels and the insipid Daddy Maxfield (wimpy! wimpy! wimpy!). Overall, though, a classic from that time period. Rhino followed this up the next year with *L.A. In*, a far less noteworthy compilation, with hardly anything worthwhile on it save for the inclusion of the Droogs' "Ahead Of My Time."

The Dogs released their self-titled LP on Phillips/London in 1979 (Phillips 9120-412). This is one of those cryptic things I found at a flea market for a quarter. They appear to have hailed from France, and should not be confused with the L.A. Dogs (who appear on the *Saturday Night Pogo* comp.). They are, however, also on the compilation LP *Skydog Commando*. This LP is full of energetic garage-style punk, mostly originals although they do "Fortune Teller," "Nobody But Me" and a song by Northwesterner Jim Valley called "I'm Real." The Dogs seemed to have released a few more singles and another LP, but I've never seen anything else by them.

I don't know much about this bunch called the Depressions, either. This self-titled LP on Barn Records (Super 2314 105) features four blonde thugs (including one with an eye patch!) playing pretty cool street punk. The LP kicks off with the obnoxious "Screw Ya," which has ridiculous vulgar lyrics. There are 14 songs total, among them gems like "Do Something," "Messin' With Your Heart" and "Chains & Leather." The singer has a real growly voice, kind of like Hugh Cornwell in the early Stranglers. After this LP, they changed their name to just "the DPs" and released two more LPs in a wimpy New Wave vein.



The very first Penetration LP I ever heard was *Race Against Time*, and it's still my favorite. Released in 1979 on Clifdayn, this was an "official bootleg" that came out after their two Virgin LPs, *Moving Targets* and *Coming Up For Air*. I'd heard the band's first single, "Don't Dictate," on the Virgin ten-inch sampler *Guillotine*, and liked it, so I took a chance on *Race Against Time*. One side is demos recorded in 1977/78, and the other side is live in 78/79. Penetration were led by the powerful voice of Pauline Murray, who really belts it out on these early demos. You get great songs like "Duty Free Technology," "V.I.P.," and a cover of Patti Smith's "Free Money." The live side has some great stuff, too, showing that the band was a raw, but tight, in concert. Unfortunately, the Virgin LPs don't quite capture the sound of the band that well (the second LP is really overproduced), so it's best to seek out this rarity of earlier stuff.



I'd never heard the Suicide Commandos before I found their *Emission Control* EP on P.S. Records. The Commandos came from Minneapolis, forming in early 1976 and breaking up in late 1978. This seven-inch EP with picture sleeve has them playing two slow, kinda bluesy numbers, and one fast stand-out called "Monster Au Go-Go." *Make A Record* was the band's first full-length, released a year later on Blank records (Blank 002). Better than the seven-inch, this LP is full of short, one-and-a-half to two-minute songs, with more of a raw, punk edge than the EP. "Shock Appeal," "Attacking The Beat," "Real Cool," "Burn It Down," and a punked-out version of "She" (Monkees) are all real good tunes. There is another single, and a posthumous live LP (on Twintone) recorded at the band's last gig entitled *The Suicide Commandos Commit Suicide Dance Concert*.



Finding rare punk/powerpop singles has been less easy lately. One of the coolest things is something Darren Merinuk hipped me to by a Winnipeg band called Lowlife. They released this three-song seven-inch in 1980 on Airout Records (WRC3-879), with a black and white cover depicting famous world leaders such as Hitler and Idi Amin on the cover. The photo on the back shows Lowlife looking like four longhaired teens, not the punks you'd expect 'em to look like from the insane sounds on this disc! All three tunes shred, especially "White Lightning" and "Thinking Naturally," the two tunes on the B-side. Very rare, and if anyone knows more about these guys, let us know!

The Reruns were a powerpop band from Detroit who released two singles. I've only been able to locate their first, on Spider Records from 1979 (SPDR-102), which was the same label as the first Romantics single. The single has a cool pic sleeve, and even an insert! Soundwise, these guys were really energetic powerpop, with a raw edge, and



"Since You Gotta Cheat" b/w "So So Alone" are both pretty rockin' numbers.

Also in a cool powerpop vein were Pezband. They started as early as 1974, but for some reason no one seems to know about them. The first thing I found by them was their 1978 single, "On and On" b/w "I'm Leavin'" (Radar Records, ADR 6). Both tunes are bouncy Mod-inspired powerpop tunes and worth checking out. Later on, I located two twelve-inch EPs, also from 1978 *Thirty Seconds Over Schaumburg* (PVC 3901) and *Two Old Two Soon* (Passport Fake-2). Both are live, and have some decent '60s influenced stuff on them. *On Thirty Seconds Over*... they cover the Yardbirds' "Stroll On" and a Yardbirds-style version of "I'm Not Talking," and on *Two Old*... they cover the Swingin' Blue Jeans' "Hippy Hippy Shake" and Buddy Holly's "Not Fade Away." Pezband were not really a punk band, and technically too early for a powerpop band, but their inclusion in this column seems reasonable nonetheless. With that in mind, I think that's all I have space for this time around!

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AN EVENING WITH THE DEAD BOYS - THE PUNK ROCK SCENE IN NEW YORK

By Ralph Alfonso

May 11, 1977

Country, Bluegrass, Blues and Other Music For Uplifting Gormandizers is a pretty stupid name for a rock club. The owners probably couldn't squeeze all of it across the front, so it was shortened to CBGB and OMFG. You can't miss it. It's the first thing you see coming out of the Bleecker Street station on New York's IRT Lexington subway local. The street ends at CBGB's doorstep. Inside, depending on what night it is, you're met at the door by either Roberta Bayley (the scene's most prolific photographer - *People*, *Oui*, etc. -- despite her part-time employment here) or Dear France, an icy redhead who says nothing, takes admission, and promptly ignores you. Admission is \$3 daily and \$4 on weekends.

The rock bands that play at CBGB's get 100 per cent of the door money (the most well-known, the Ramones, have collected \$2,000 a night). The club makes its profits on food and drink. Since a bottle of Coke is \$1 and Heineken beer \$1.75, you can trust the waitresses to pester you about ordering more. The interior of the club is a long, constricted rectangle with a stage at the end. To the right, as you enter, is a long bar, while tables are found across the aisle. Buried behind these is the CBGB's jukebox, which holds all the latest releases from the scene, in addition to '60s favorites.

This parallel of tables and bar breaks open into a small area, located in front of the stage, dotted with tables (some of which are barely a foot away from the stage). Prevalent in this section are little raised platforms in the floor, which are a constant source of annoyance to anyone attempting to walk normally.

The purple-ish tablecloths are adorned with candles stuck in empty Heineken bottles. Everything in CBGB's is incredibly dark and crowded, just so you can never see what a seedy, dilapidated place it really is. At certain times, you can make out the gaunt, macabre shadow of the CBGB's dog as he slithers from table to table, followed closely by the specter of the CBGB's cat.

Despite this, the regular patrons find it a great hangout because if enough of them loiter about after a show, the club will stay open until morning. To get to the bathrooms, you have to fight your way to the left of the stage (and through a gaggle of photographers and hangers-on) to the back, where one finds the kitchen, dressing room, and assorted dark places, and finally, down a flight of stairs one finds the coveted destination. Once there, you're met by walls thick with graffiti as past and present performers as well as visitors leave messages for posterity. Toronto's groups have managed to take over a whole stall wall. Unfortunately, there are no towels to wipe your hands with. There is toilet paper, however.

CBGB's is owned by a robust, bearded, somewhat disheveled curly-haired man called Hilly Kristal, who's probably in his mid-30s or early 40s (it's hard to determine). This is the fourth bar he's operated since 1966, and by far the most successful. He forsook his original intentions to book only country music into CBGB's after a fellow wandered in off the street and asked if his band could give a show. The fellow's name was Tom Verlaine and the group was Television (the first of the New York bands to receive national press coverage, but ironically, one of the last to land a record contract. They have an album on Elektra). Prodded by Verlaine's backer Terry Ork (who now runs Ork Records, a small independent label), Hilly quickly accepted the new music and opened his doors to the ensuing flood.

On this particular April night, he's standing at the door, beer in hand, chatting with people and constantly answering the phone. It's going to be a hectic evening, as tonight's show will feature the first North American appearance of the Damned, one of the biggest groups on the British punk rock scene. Punk rock. That's what the media call it, a handy label used to describe the recent explosion of rock activity in New York, and of the emergence of groups who bear



Jimmy Zero of the Dead Boys. Photo by Ralph Alfonso.

little relation to the popular, commercial artists who dominate radio and the marketplace. This is a scene that has been attracting record companies in droves (signing up no less than 10 acts in under 10 months). However, the punk rock label can only be used to describe this music in an ideological sense as the groups have little musical similarity to each other. What they do have in common is that they all played the same New York clubs. The cognoscenti here call it "new wave" rock and are hoping the press will pick up what they feel is a less derogatory term for the music. But for all its publicity, how well is the new music selling? "Remarkably well, when you consider we don't have the support of radio," said Seymour Stein, president of Sire Records. "But we're going to win over radio; that's our prime objective." Seymour's label boasts three of the biggest stars on the scene: the Ramones, Richard Hell and the Talking Heads.

But getting back to tonight's performance, the Damned were preceded on the bill by the Dead Boys, a Cleveland-based group led by shrieking lead-singer Stiv Bators. Bators can confront his gaunt, bony, barely-covered-by-flesh face into a continuous drama of sheer repulsion. The group is slab upon slab of deafening noise, and the crowd loves it. And what a crowd: leather-jacketed toughs hand-in-hand with equally fearsome girls at their sides. But appearances aren't all they're meant to be.

"Most of these people aren't real punks," says Tom Katz, publisher of *Punk* magazine, a New York-based monthly devoted to the new music scene. "Their leather jackets were bought second-hand and already broken in." Katz' own leather jacket covers a white shirt and tie matched with jeans and sneakers. Katz got bored with being a political science major in Detroit, and he moved to New York a little over a year ago. While he enjoys his present role, he does plan to return to his studies in the future. But for now, he's part of a carnivorous and highly critical audience.

"If it's not for real, the crowd picks up on it right away," says Dead Boys guitarist Jimmy Zero. "When they see a poseur they don't get nasty, they just ignore him. I mean, you can be Eric Clapton or his equivalent on all instruments, and bring a band in here, but if you're trying to bullshit the crowd into making them believe you're something that you aren't, they're not going to have anything to do with you."

"People don't want musical bands here," adds Roberta Bayley. "If the Beach Boys came to CBGB's and played, people would boo them right off the stage."

Not so the Dead Boys, who are met with favorable reaction after culminating their set with their anthem "I Wanna Be A Dead Boy." They've recorded an album that might be out this summer if they manage to sign a record contract.

The Damned, meanwhile, played two sets of totally frantic hard

rock born of confusion, desperation and chaos. They opened by throwing roses into the crowd, but switched to pies at the start of the second set. The latter were promptly returned by the audience, along with beer bottles and assorted debris.

Singer Dave Vanian was dressed in a black gigolo tuxedo, his face painted white to complement black lipstick and darkened eyes. With the addition of the slicked-back cut of his hair, he looked for all the world like a modern day Bela Legosi.

He stole the show, however, with the last song of the night. Hot with sweat gnawing at his make-up, Vanian leapt onto a girl in the first row of tables, dragging her to the ground, kissing and fondling her. He pulled her onto the stage and repeated his actions before throwing her back to her seat. Needless to say, there were no encores.

But for the final word on CBGB's, we'll leave that to Seymour Stein, who says, "This place will be famous one day." He could be right. The Cavern in Liverpool, where the Beatles first played, wasn't that great-looking a dive, either.

Ralph Alfonso turned this unpublished article in as an English assignment. He got an 'A.'



Dead Boys in CBGB's bathroom. Photo by Ralph



The Skulls, 1977

The Story of What? Records

What? Records was responsible for putting out some of the earliest, and most vicious sounding punk to come out of Los Angeles in the 1970s. Recalls Brenden Mullen from a What? bio, "The scene at that time was about 20 people, literally. X hadn't performed publicly yet, the Go-Gos hadn't even been dreamed up yet. Chris Ashford's What? Records predate any other recordings released during 1977, including those from the legendary Dangerhouse label, Slash Records, and Posh Boy." Do the names the Eyes, the Dils and the Controllers mean anything to you? Well, they did to a young Chris Ashford, a kung fu enthusiast who was working at Peaches on Hollywood Boulevard at the time. "I was the import buyer, therefore I was listening to all the punk records that coming out in late 1976 to early 1977," says Ashford. "As well, I was selling them to Black Randy and K.K. and Tommy Gear from the Screemers."

Ashford was also hanging out at the Masque, which was a rehearsal hall-turned-punk-club in a basement off of a back alley. He was also friends with a budding young band called the Germs. When they said that they wanted to make a record, Ashford offered to do it for them, buying some quarter inch tape, and using Pat Smear's two-track reel-to-reel, in his garage. The result was "Forming," the first Germs single, released on What? Records in the spring of 1977. Ashford says that he saw that Rhino had put out a Wild Man Fischer single, and he thought "I can do that." A little while later, another young band called the Dils gave him a tape of two songs they'd recorded. Ashford put them out as What? number two. The rest of the bands on the What? roster were Masque bands that he hung out with, and liked. So, what was it about those Masque bands that he liked?

"The Controllers had a real Michigan sound, with a bizarre sense of humor. If you liked the Stooges and MC5, you had to like them," says Chris. "The Eyes had a unique pop sense to them. Great songs, dark themes, and two lead singers. Charlotte Caffey could've been another Joan Jett. The Skulls were high energy. Always on the edge, and they didn't last long."

Having a vested interest in the material being released, Ashford supervised recording sessions, and learned a lot from engineers on the job. All the early What? stuff was recorded on 4-track, except for the Dils who recorded themselves, and KAOS who used a 16-track. With KAOS, Ashford also began having a hand in the mastering end of the product, as well.

Today, Ashford still lives in Los Angeles, and runs a new and used record/kung fu videos store called Ruckus Records, which he opened in 1993. In 1985, he turned the What? label into the Iloki label. Iloki has released mostly instro/surf-oriented records by bands such as the Halibuts and Davie Allan and the Arrows.

"This Christian label, WRD Records, they called me, because they wanted to use the name What?," says Chris. "I was thinking of doing surf stuff anyway, so they bought the name from me. They used it to put out records in a secular vein, like Tonio K." Asked why he named What?'s successor Iloki, Chris responded "Because I'm low key, like low profile. Get it?"

What? discography:

Germs "Forming"/"Sex Boy" 7-inch single 1977 (What 001)
Dils "I Hate The Rich"/"You're Not Blank" 7-inch single 1977 (What 002)
Eyes - "Don't Talk To Me"/Skulls - "Victim"/Controllers - "Neutron Bomb" 7-inch EP 1978 (What EP03)
Controllers "Neutron Bomb"/"Killer Queens" 7-inch single 1978 (What 04)
Tidal Waves "Fun Fun Fun"/"Sunrise" 7-inch single 1979 (What 05)
Martyrs "Pig Pen Victim"/"Social Sacrifice" 7-inch single 1979 (What 06)
KAOS Product Of A Sick Mind 12-inch EP 1980
tracks: *Alcohol Holiday/Top Secret/Iron Dream* (What W7-1216)
What Is It? compilation LP 1982 with previously released singles tracks, plus unreleased material by the above bands (W12-2403)
What Stuff compilation CD 1990 rerelease of What Is It? comp. with more previously unreleased tracks (Iloki CD1011)

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The Dils, 1977

REVIEWS

G.G. Allin and the Motor City Badboys *The Masturbation Session* (Alive/Bomp! 10-inch) I've never really understood the fascination with Mr. Allin. I recently saw that documentary, and for the most part he came off as a pathetic idiot and a violent maniac, crossed with a spoiled brat. I dunno, I think Iggy did it all better before, and he only used peanut butter. Anyways, this 10-inch features songs cut around 1979 with three ex-MC5 members. The sound quality is pretty bad, but it's okay Stooges/MC5 style punk. The B-side has GG "getting it on," if you know what I mean, and a live run-thru of "I Wanna Be Your Dog." - AW

Chron Gen *The Best Of* (Helter Skelter/Hate LP) To quote the press release for this one, "Chron Gen were a great punk rock band with a style that was never too fast, but always very energetic." Well put, and since this LP was my first real exposure to Chron Gen's music, I would agree with that assessment. The band seems to have existed from the late '70s until the early '80s, releasing a few seven inches and one LP. This release compiles their best tunes, from their debut EP's "Puppets of War" to a previously unreleased live version of "Abortions." Chron Gen's music certainly was punk influenced, but has a definite "postpunk" feel to certain tracks, also. Their version of the new wave/novelty song "Jet Boy Jet Girl" is great and really raw. This LP is a best of because it doesn't really have any bad songs. Stand out tracks include "Clouded Eyes," "You Make Me Spew" and "Mindless Few." On gold vinyl. (via Vidaschi 11, 00152 Roma, Italy) - AW

Consumers *All My Friends Are Dead* LP (In The Red) These crazies formed in 1977, in Phoenix, then moved to Los Angeles, and cut this amazing set of blistering punk tunes which have remained unreleased until now. Their line-up included one Paul B. Culler, later of Vox Pop (with Jeff Dahl), 45 Grave, and even later still joined the revamped (and less interesting) Dream Syndicate. Oh, yeah - he also produced some band called the Droogs. The singer in this band, David Wiley sounds uncannily like Keith Whittaker from the Demics. This short LP collects 11 short, fast and intense punk songs with titles like "Teen Love Song," "Ballad Of Son Of Sam" and "Punk Church." These guys were brutal sounding, drawing comparison to early Motorhead and the Dead Boys. They wouldn't sound out of place on a *Killed By Death* volume, either. If that isn't recommendation enough, I don't know what is. - AW

C*nts *Why Baby?* (Disturbing CD) The C*nts (like you don't all know what that word is!) have been around the Chicago scene since the late '70s, doomed both by their name and their sound to permanent obscurity. This disc is great, from up-tempo tunes to Stooges-style guitar, to some real psychedelic numbers, this one should be enjoyed by the other 999 lucky souls who picked up this limited edition of 1,000. I particularly liked "Big Mistake," with its lyrics, "Join our band! Big Mistake!" Anyone who appreciates a twisted sense of humor should get really into this. - LL (3238 S. Racine, Chicago, IL 60608)

Deadbeats *Live at the Whisky, 1978* (Sympathy CD) This bizarre punk/new wave outfit only released (I think) one single, "Kill The Hippies," although an unreleased song "Let's Shoot Maria" appears on the *Dangerhouse, Volume One* compilation. The Deadbeats included one Geza X in their ranks, and sounded like they listened to

a lot of Capt. Beefheart. Amongst strange, disjointed originals like "Mean Mr. Mommy Man" and "What Would Happen If My Body Left Without Me?" are crazed covers of the Rumlbers' "Boss," the Pink Fairies' "Somewhere To Go" and the "Munsters Theme." Of course, "Kill The Hippies" is included and there are two previously unreleased studio tracks thrown in for good measure. - AW

Deviants *Plooff!* (Alive/Bomp!) Been waiting a few years for this to get reissued on CD! A legendary British band's 1967 psych/punk masterpiece featuring Mick Farren (later Wayne Kramer's songwriting partner). Great proto-punk tunes like "I'm Coming Home," as well as more experimental psych oddities like "Nothing Man." Chances are that if you dig the MC5 and Stooges, you'll dig this. As close to having a Motor City band as the Brits would ever get. Farren would later carry his vision of destructo-rock even further with the Pink Fairies. - AW

DMZ *Live At The Rat '76* (Chunk 7-inch EP) A pretty wild little nugget from the early days of punk. The legendary DMZ caught live at the infamous Rat in September of 1976! Not the same versions of songs off of the now out-of-print-for-years *Live At The Rat* compilation LP (also featuring the Real Kids!). This tape has languished in obscurity, until Erik Lindgren rescued it recently and mixed it down. Great versions of "First Time Is The Best Time," "Boy From Nowhere" and "Get To School." Dig the picture sleeve on this seven-inch as well: it pictures the band going for some sort of pseudo NY Dolls look in what must be an early promo shot. - AW

Flamin' Groovies *You Tore Me Down* (Bomp! 10-inch) A swank rerelease of Bomp's first release, the "You Tore Me Down"/"Him Or Me" single from 1974. Side one's got the two sides of the single, and it sounds as good as it did when I first heard it some fifteen years ago. The flipside features four songs recorded live in London, in 1976. The sound quality is a little rough, but you get to hear the Groovies run through "Shake Some Action," "I'll Cry Alone," "Miss Amanda Jones" and "Hey Hey Hey" with complete fervor and high energy sound! Great sleeve design, too. - AW

Germes *Cat's Clause* (Munster 10-inch) In some ways, the lavishly produced sleeve that comes with this Spanish blue-vinyl record is better than the record. The well-remembered history of the Germes is unfortunately littered with typos, but fascinating nonetheless. On the record you get a selection of lo-fi live recordings, which range from fair to semi-decent. All of side one, which starts off with a sloppy cover of PIL's "Public Image" was recorded at the Starwood. One track entitled "Germes Riot" isn't actually music, but the crowd rioting. Side two has three more live tracks from the Hong King Cafe and the Fleetwood, plus two tracks taken from studio rehearsals. This is really more of a collectors type thing. Those seeking a good introduction to the band would be better off finding the recent *MIA-The Complete Anthology* CD collection. - AW

Go-Go's *Beyond the Valley of the Go-Go's* (IRS double CD)/*The Whole World Lost Its Head* (IRS CD5)/*Good Girl* (IRS CD5) Finally, more than a dozen years after the release of their smash album *Beauty and the Beat*, here is a collection of live tracks and pre-album demos, many of which had been floating around on bootlegs for years, like the great "London Boys." Quite a few of the tracks are from a smokin' show at Palos Verdes High School, which I'm sure was a real treat. The Go-Go's were the first band that I actually liked enough to pay cold, hard-earned cash to join

their fan club back in the early '80s. Both of the shows I saw by them (in '81 at the Eagles Hippodrome and '82 at Hec Edmundson Pavilion) were great. The second CD of the collection has quite a few cuts from their later, Talk Show-era period, and therefore aren't as great, but all the rarities on the first disc more than make up for any shortcomings. Their new tracks, especially "The Whole World Lost Its Head," are great, with hilarious lyrics. Punk rock isn't dead! Both CD singles contain more unreleased tracks. - LL

Gorilla *Message To The World* (Damaged Goods CD) Gorilla were a little known U.K. outfit that played a sort of "pubrock" style that existed before the punk explosion of '76 or so. They did a silly version of "You Really Got Me" (as "Gorilla Got Me") and toured with the Flamin' Grooves. This CD reminds me of why I never really dug 'em too much. A lot of their stuff is pretty lame hard rock, and they really massacre "Foxy Lady." Nice muttonchops, guys, you looked ridiculous. Still, though, the informative liner notes and pure rarity of this band's material may enough to warrant a purchase on your part. You decide. - AW

The Jam *Extras/Live Jam* (Polydor CDs) The Jam were one of my most favorite bands of the "Mod revival" scene of the late '70s and early '80s, and these discs show both how great they were, and how horrible some of their later, white boy soul material became! The live CD showcases some of my faves by the band: "The Modern World," "Thick As Thieves" and "Down In The Tube Station At Midnight," as well as some of their later, more horn-oriented pieces like "Move On Up," et al. Collectors would be best served by these selections, but it's not a bad place to start if you're interested in The Jam's history. - LL

Peter Laughner and Friends *Take The Guilar Player For A Ride* (Tim Kerr CD) At last, CD-quality Peter Laughner, thanks to Tim Kerr. Laughner, who died at the tender young age of 24 back in 1977, was a pivotal force in the sublime Cleveland proto-punk scene of the 1970s. Except for the bootleg "Life Stinks," which has horrible sound quality, this is one of the few documents of Laughner's career with his band Rocket From The Tombs (who also included Crocus Behemoth, later of Pere Ubu, and Cheetah Chrome, future Dead Boy). Look for more on Laughner in the second issue of Do The Pop, where we chronicle the exciting and crazy Cleveland scene. Cleveland... it's more than just the city with the flaming river, and we can prove it! (vinyl double LP includes two songs not on the CD). - LL



The Moberlys *First Album* (Precedent CD) Jim Basnight has been one of the longest-lasting Seattle scene members. Since the mid-'70s he's been slugging it out everywhere from the Roosevelt High School Auditorium, to Metropolis,

to the Off Ramp. Now, the Moberlys' first album has been reissued on Bannight's Precedent label, much to my delight. The Moberlys were a near-flawless blend of punk rock and power pop: perfect for the late '70s and early '80s, and of course too good for the then-lame Seattle scene. They met with some local success, but Bannight later moved to L.A. to try to expand his horizons a bit. Well, he's back in the Great Northwest (cause no one can stay away forever, no matter how hard they try!) and at it again with his great new band the Rockinghams. Those interested in the roots of the Seattle scene would do well by this disc. Just wish he'd added the Moberlys' later single "I Wanna Be Yours," backed with an awesome cover of "Cinderella." I spun that one to death back in '82! (7616 Latona Ave. N.E., Seattle, WA 98115) - LL

Menace *The Complete Discography* (Helter Skelter/Hate LP) Another great British punk band circa 1977 gets its material re-released. I'd only heard one song from these guys before, the great "Screwed Up," which was covered by the (Canadian) Subhumans. This collection of Menace's seven-inch releases from 1977-79 is pretty amazing. They had really catchy, fast songs with lots of shouted "beerhall choruses." Besides the aforementioned tune, you also get winners like "Insane Society" and "I Need Nuthin'." They also do a song called "The Young Ones" which I also know by another band called Lockjaw, who also released this song as the b-side to their one-and-only single. Anyone know the origin of this tune? These guys certainly deserved more praise than they probably got, as they seem to have languished in obscurity for years, but now with this cool red vinyl LP, you can hear the great punk fervor that Menace created! - AW

The Modern Lovers *Precise Modern Lovers Order* (Rounder CD) As a big fan of early Modern Lovers material, but not so much of Jonathan Richman's later solo efforts, I was thrilled when this package arrived in the mail from Rounder. These live documents, from Boston and Berkeley, in 1971 and 1973 respectively, give a great taste of this band's spirit and youthful joie de vivre. Richman's between-song banter is great; dig this: "This song is for every girl out there whose father ever owned an electric two-twenty-five..." Not to be missed, and one of my favorites of late. Highly recommended. - LL

The Nuns *Four Days In A Motel Room: Their Greatest Sins* (Posh Boy CD) *Live at Mabuhay Gardens, San Francisco, 1977* (Out Of Darkness LP) Back in 1980, The Nuns were a seminal punk band from L.A., who released an LP on Bomp! They broke up shortly thereafter and not much was heard from them for a long time. Now, I always liked their Bomp! LP, with stand-out cuts like "Media Control," "Getting Straight" and "World War 3". The dual lead vocals of Jeff Olenner and keyboardist Jennifer Miro gave them an edge that few other L.A. punk bands did, and the ability to cross over into pop territory without being wimpy. Unbeknownst to me, The Nuns have reformed a few times, and recorded. This CD collects nine songs recorded in 1993, two from 1989 and the entire Bomp! LP. Unfortunately, everything but the 1980 stuff on this CD sucks. Even production help from people like Geza X (who produced The Germs and Dead Kennedys), and Brett Gurewitz (Bad Religion) can't help their sorry excuse for washed-up New Wave sounds on most of this disc. The running order is equally bizarre: four new songs, then "Suicide Child" off of the debut 1980 LP, then some more new stuff, a couple of 1989 cuts, then the entire first LP! But the new stuff is so goddawful sounding, that it's

unbearable to sit through it. It doesn't help matters that the digital remixing of the 1980 LP seems to have toned down the rawness, either. Find a copy of the original vinyl LP, if you can, 'cause this thing sucks! *Live at Mabuhay Gardens* is more like it. Even though the sound quality of this one is raw, it still beats the hell out of the reissued material. Captured live just after their inception, The Nuns run through an incredibly tight and raunchy performance. They do cool covers of The Stooges' "Cock In My Pocket" and "Gimme Danger," plus the NY Dolls' "Human Being"! Despite the low-tech sound, the band's energy sure comes through, and the loud mastering job on the (red) vinyl does it justice. Cool cover design, too. - AW

The Pagans *Everybody Hates You* (Crypt CD) Yeah! Thirty mofa punk rockin' classics from The Pagans, Cleveland's pride and joy! If you have never heard these guys, now's the chance. If you missed the seminal vinyl re-issuing of Pagans material on Treehouse Records back in 1985, then lose sleep no more. This primal rockin' CD stands as the ultimate testament to this band's glory with pretty much all their recorded output: all their 7" singles from the late '70s, some tracks from the 1983 "The Pink Album," and some later 1980s cuts. You just can't miss hearing such sensitive punk rock ditties as "What's This Shit Called Love?" "Dead End America," (two versions!) "Street Where Nobody Lives," "She's A Cadaver" and much more. Plus, there's a super fold-out color sleeve with tons o' pics and liner notes. Believe me, punker, you need this! - AW

Peter and the Test Tube Babies *Pissed & Proud* (Century Media CD) These guys were a semi-legendary punk band from England who formed in 1978, and broke up some time in the mid-'80s. As purveyors of a style of punk rock dubbed "Oil" by some (named so after the

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Cockney expression used to get someone's attention), they mixed melody, humor and gritty streetwise lingo to pen such smashing originals as "Banned From The Pubs" and "Maniac." But wait, there's more! You can also hear equally fun and catchy punk rock tunes like "Moped Lads," "Up Yer Bum" and the totally ridiculous "Transvestite," which finds the usually macho singer questioning his sexual orientation! All of the tunes, most of which appear to have been recorded live, have the ingredients for your next "pogo dancing party," except the CD's last track, "Disco" which shows the band digressing into less palatable musical stylings, much of which would show up in lead guitarist Derek's next band, the horrible Gene Loves Jezebel. - AW

Pezband *File Under: Pop Vocal* (Not Lame 7-inch EP) The Pezband were a pre-punk band from Chicago that are deemed, for lack of a better term, powerpop. Really, they were just a good, straight forward rock 'n' roll band. I've known of their later releases (from 1978-79) that are in a rockin' garage-pop style, but this EP is the earliest recordings yet. This stuff was recorded with the original line-up in 1974. These guys had cool hooks, and a sound that wasn't completely unradio friendly, or at least it doesn't seem like that in retrospect. Of course, things were different back then. In some ways, the sound these guys had in 1974 is not dissimilar to the Droogs in that they obviously weren't playing what was trendy at the time. With that in mind, this is a pretty good little seven-inch, and well worth checking out. - AW

Runaways *Born To Be Bad* (Marilyn/Bomp! CD) With Joan Jett having a resurgence in popularity lately, it's not surprising that her old band, The Runaways, have had material from the 1970s reissued as well. This CD, which is also available on the 10" vinyl format, consists of previously unheard rehearsal tapes made by Kim Fowley, the Runaways' erstwhile manager-promoter-scam artist during the band's very earliest days. According to the CD liner notes, these songs were taped in August of 1975, after the band had been together five days! Noticeably absent from the session are lead singer Cheri Curie and guitarist Lita Ford, because the band was a trio at this point, with Jett handling the lead vocals and guitar, Micki Steele (future Bangle) on bass and vocals, and Sandy West on drums and vocals. Only Jett and West would make it into the later five-piece outfit (with Steele replaced by Jackie Fox). The recording is raw, and the band tends to sound too much like a really amateur bar band, yet beneath that there's a strong desire for these gals to rock out. You'll hear embryonic versions of later Runaways classics like "Thunder" and "You Drive Me Wild," rarer tunes like "Yesterday's Kids" and the title track, "Born To Be Bad," plus haphazard covers of tunes like "All Right Now," "Rock 'n' Roll" and "Wild Thing." Hell, there's even a color picture of the three-girl line-up, and I'm sure Jett must only be around 16, Sandy West looking like Marcia Brady, and Micki wondering what she's doing there. - AW

Stiff Little Fingers *Pure Fingers Live St. Patricks 1993* (Dojo CD) I'm always a little hesitant when class of '77 punk bands get back together for a "reunion," but SLF's last reunion in 1988, after a five year layoff, made for a couple of good live LPs culled from a couple of different shows on that tour. This CD is from a 1993 St. Patricks Day show in Glasgow, and again shows the band in fine form. Noticeably absent is original bassist Ali McCordie, and in his place is ex-Jam bassist Bruce Foxton! There are 20 tunes on this excellent sounding CD.

from old faves like "Nobody's Hero" and "Fly The Flag" to new songs like "What If I Want More" and "Road To Kingdom Come." The new songs, of which there appear to be six, show that SLF haven't lost it. These tunes are as aggressive as anything the band did during its heyday, propelled along by Jake Burn's trademark growled vocals. They even let Bruce take over the mike for a decent version of the Jam's "Smithers-Jones." Worth investigating if you're a Fingers fan. - AW

The Stranglers *The Early Years '74/'75/'76 - Rare & Unreleased* (Newspeak CD) Being a fan of the first few Stranglers LPs made me want to pick up this oddity. A collection of early material, as the title applies, is what this is. Three 1976 demos start things off, rougher versions of "(Get A) Grip (On Yourself)" and "Bitching," plus a really embryonic version of "Go Buddy Go." Then there's a live 1976 set recorded at the Hammersmith Odeon when they opened for the Patti Smith Group. Obviously an audience recording, the set suffers from bootleg quality sound, but the band does sound really raw, and punk. The 1974 demos that follow were recorded with their first keyboardist (pre-Dave Greenfield), and are oddly very "pop" considering the raunchiness of their '77-'78 material. Finally, a 1975 performance of "Princess of the Streets" closes the CD out, and it ends up being one of the best tracks on the CD, both in terms of sound quality and "punkness." An interesting release, but for Stranglers die-hard fans only, I'd say. - AW

The Up *Killer Up* (Total Energy/Bomp! CD) The Up were a Detroit area band that shared the stage with bands such as the MC5 and the Stooges, and were affiliated with the White Panthers party during their existence from 1967-72. The Up only released one single of their own, and another that was a split single with Allen Ginsberg as a benefit for imprisoned writer/activist John Sinclair. While the Up certainly showed that they were influenced by the popular musical trends of the time, their overall sound was much more raw than a lot of their jammed-out hippie contemporaries. "Just Like An Aborigine," the CD's lead-off track and the A-side of a 1971 single has a guitar line not dissimilar to the simple chording that bands like the Ramones would use a few years later. In fact, Sinclair goes so far as to say in his liner notes that the Ramones were actually "a watered-down, cheapened clone of the Up." While the influence may perhaps be there, that statement is a little far fetched. Yet, it's their unique rawness and high energy sound that does set them apart from a lot of the drek that was being made around the same time. Their version of "Train Kept A Rollin'" shreds and brings to mind early Blue Cheer, and there's also a wild take on "C'Mon and Swim." - AW

Vibrators/Boys *Live In Concert* split CD (Windsong International) This is a great quality live CD featuring two British '77 Punk bands, the Vibrators and the Boys. Actually, the Boys are up first with eight tunes recorded in 1980, just before they broke up, showing off their powerpop-ish punk sound, including their 1978 semi-hit "Brickfield Nights," plus other familiar songs like "Terminal Love" and "New Guitar In Town." I love the Vibrators' first couple of LPs, but their later stuff sucks bigtime because they strayed from their punk roots and went for a more commercial sound. Luckily, this stuff was recorded in 1977, when they were at their height of greatness, and they do 13 songs of short, fast and melodic garage-punk. All my faves are here like "Wrecked On You," "Baby Baby," "Keep It Clean," "Sex Kick" and even a couple I don't recognize! Only two

songs make it over the two-minute mark. Excellent! - AW

Vice Squad *Live & Loud* (Cleopatra CD) When I was 17, I taped a copy of the Vice Squad's 1982 *Stand Strong & Proud* LP off of a friend, and eventually wore the tape out. I've never been able to find a copy of the LP (anyone got one for trade?), but this live CD reminds me of why I liked them so much. Aside from having a powerful and charismatic singer in blue-blond haired Beki Bondage, Vice Squad had a great heavy punk sound, and catchy songs, too. To me, and I'm sure other teenage punkers, the youthful Beki (she was 15 when Vice Squad recorded their debut song, "Nothing" in 1979) was a punk wet dream come true. Beki was super sexy, and tough! Decked out in leather and bondage gear, the former female wrestler had a voice that sent shivers up your spine. Of course, their best-known song "Stand Strong and Proud" is on this decently recorded live CD, culled from a 1982 show in, of all places, Eugene, Oregon! Showing off just how tight and crunching they could be, the band rips through tunes like "Rock & Roll Massacre," "Latex Love" (a premonition of days to come?), "Upright Citizen" and a blistering take of the Sex Pistols' "E.M.I." Great stuff! - AW

The Wailers *Tall Cool One/Golden Classics* (Collectables CD) In 1964, Imperial records (a subsidiary of Capitol) released the original vinyl version of this CD. The record, with its cheesy "budget cover" was basically a re-release then of the "Wailers & Co." LP that the Wailers themselves had released on Etiquette the year before. Collectables obtained the original masters for this LP from Capitol, and the result is a fine sounding CD reissue of a great party time record! A revamped 1961 version of "Tall Cool One," The Wailers' 1959 hit single is included, as is the original '61 take of "Louie Louie," featuring the superb vocal talents of Rockin' Robin Robertson. There are boss instrumental tunes like the spastic "Mashi," with it's crazy organ runs, "Frenzy" and "Tough Walk," with it's honking sax. Kent Marill vocalizes on the screamer "Isabella" and female vocalists The Marshams make an appearance on "We're Going Surfin'." With only 11 songs, this makes for a pretty short CD, but considering the rarity of the original version of this, it's well worth checking out. (See *Cryptic Tymes #5* for the complete Wailers story. --ed.) - AW

Warsaw *Warsaw* (Movie Play Gold CD) This is the stuff that's been floating around as bootleg vinyl for year now. Joy Division were originally called Warsaw, and if you've never heard this, their earliest and crudest demos from 1977-78, check it out. This appears to be a legit release of this material, from a label that I've never heard of and whose other releases included CDs by Barry White and Capt. Beefheart! The liner notes tell the whole story, suffice to say this is primo stuff. As a bonus, you also get five additional songs (six for me, as there's another song not on my vinyl copy) culled from the "Ideal Beginning" bootleg EP that first appeared in the early '80s. Totally raw and unlike what would later come, these guys really were pretty punk when they first started. - AW

The Zeros *Knockin' Me Dead* (Rockville CD) I can't believe it, a new Zeros release, and their first since 1981! Besides re-doing a couple of oldies ("Wimp" and "Beat Your Heart Out"), they do a slew of songs written by 'em back in 1977-78, and a couple of hep covers of the Standells and Bo Diddley. All of this sounds like it was recorded in 1978, and the Zeros prove who the real Zeros really are. (Rockville, PO Box 800, Rockville Center, NYC, NY, 11571-0800) - AW

Various *Live At The Roxy* (Magdum Music CD) Actually, this is a CD reissue of the *Farewell To The Roxy* live LP from '79 or so. Unlike its predecessor, this one has mainly obscure punk outfits on it, with the exception of UK Subs, who get two tunes on here (because their songs are so short!). We'd also heard the Jets and Blitz before, and discovered that Acme Sewage Co. were the Users in disguise, but we had no idea who any of the other bands are! Still, most of this is pretty good, with Acme Sewage Co., Billy and the Goats, UK Subs, XL5 and Red Light being the standouts. Good sound quality, but mastered from a vinyl source, since you can hear some surface noise on the CD! - AW & LL

Various *Live From The Masque, 1978* (Flipside CD) The Masque was a legendary club in the early days of the Los Angeles punk scene. Many seminal early punk bands performed there, and this CD is a testament to that club. The title itself is a little misleading as the material was actually recorded at a benefit for The Masque held at the Elks Lodge Hall on Feb. 25, 1978. Four bands are captured on 4-track tape by veteran engineer/producer Geza X, including the WeirDOS, Bags, Germs and Skulls. With a little tape restoration, the sound quality's been presumably beefed up a bit, although it's still pretty raw. For me, the best stuff is from the WeirDOS who contribute crash 'n' burn versions of "Solitary Confinement," "Life Of Crime" and four more. Second up is the pseudo British punk sound of the Skulls, who run through seven songs, including "Building Models" and a cover of Eddie Cochran's "Nervous Breakdown!" The Bags are okay female-led art-punk, and the Germs are...well, the Germs. Live documents of these guys can be so iffy because of Darby Crash's tendency to be either brilliant or pathetic. Unfortunately on this, he's sounding pretty pathetic and their performance is up there with the one in *Decline & Fall of Western Civilization* where Darby can barely sing into the mike. Overall, though, this is a pretty cool document and I await the second volume. - AW



Various *AK-79* (Propeller/Flying Nun CD) This outstanding compilation of New Zealand punk bands originally came out on vinyl in 1980, on Ripper Records. This reissue contains all the tracks on that LP, plus a slew of extra stuff culled from unreleased tapes, rare singles and so forth. New Zealand in the years 1977-80 produced quite a few good bands, and while not all of them are "punk" of course, there's a lot of good stuff on here. For punk fans, there are some great, raw cuts by bands like Proud Scum, Terrorways and Suburban Reptiles, as well as forays into powerpop by bands such as Marching Girls, Spelling Mistakes and the Swingers. The infamous Toy Love even get three songs, one of which is the classic psych-punk extravaganza "Frogs" (which first appeared on Bomp's *Waves, Volume Two* compilation in 1980). Detailed liner notes and excellent sound make this a worthy investment! - AW

Various *Pebbles, Volumes Six & Seven: Chicago* (AIP/Bomp! CDs) Two more fuzz-filled volumes of 1960s punk that originally appeared on the *Pebbles* and *Highs In The Mid-Sixties* vinyl series in the '70s and '80s. Both these volumes collect an amazing selection of raw sounds from the likes of the Omens, Buzzsaw, Foggy Notions, Little Boy Blues, Children of Darkness, Nobody's Children, Trolls and many more. Both volumes feature some previously unissued material that's real hip, though we could've done without the silly novelty version of "Let It All Hang Out" by Barney Pip. Fairly informative liner notes also. - AW & LL

Various *Smash The State, Volume One* (No Exit LP) This LP is Frank Manley's follow-up to the "Smash The State" Canadian punk discography. This well put-together compilation gathers five rare EP's by Canuck bands circa 1979-81 onto one long-player. Arson's great "Coho? Coho!" b/w "Living With The White Folks" single is on here, as well as the unreleased "Pretty Girls." The Fits, who've made appearances on certain volumes of those *Killed By Death* comps, have their great 7" on here as well. The rest of the comp. is taken up by entire EP's by the Dry Heaves, Rock And Roll Bitches, Hot Nasties and Sturgeons, all of whom produce raw, energetic and obnoxious punk rock. Just check out the insanity of the Hot Nasties' "I Am A Confused Teenager" and the Dry Heaves' "I Can't Puke" for proof! All of these releases in the original form are quite rare, so why not pick up this excellent re-issue comp. now. Vol. 2 is apparently out now, too. (PO Box 4264, Westmount, Quebec, H3Z 3B6, Canada). - AW

Various *Varning! For Punk* (AGG triple CD set) If you need a crash course in Swedish punk rock, here's the place to start. This three CD boxed set has 146 songs on it, by 54 different Swedish punk bands, spanning the years 1977-85. At least, that's what we garnered from the booklet notes (each CD has its own detailed, picture-filled booklet!), that are in Swedish. Not too much of a problem, since Lisa reads Swedish pretty well. The music on this ranges from melodic sing-a-long '77 style punk and Oil to superfast, unintelligible hardcore/thrash stuff. Since most of the bands sing in Swedish, we have almost no idea what most of these bands are singing about, and since a lot of it is just too fast for translation (or enjoyable listening), we won't bother. A complete run-down of everything on this three-CD set would take forever. Our faves are the more melodic, earlier punk bands like Reklamation, Mob 47, Sollimpa, the Bristles, Inga Val, D.N.A., Nocens, the Past, Ernst & the Edholm Rebels, and maybe a few more. One question, though: how come there's no Rude Kids stuff on this? (c/o Kent Bernsten, Stromsvag 11, 420 17 Olofstorp, Sweden) - AW & LL

Some 'zines we recommend:

Teen Scene
34 Highland Cross, #2
Rutherford, NJ 07070
blairb1@gramercy.ios.com
current garage-punk happenings

Bad Trip
4325 John Wesley Dr.
Dallas, GA 30132
more garage lunacy

Misty Lane
L.A. Puscucci 66
00168 Roma
Italy
Italian-language garage 'zine

Noise For Heroes
P.O. Box 60369
San Diego, CA 92166
high-energy rock 'n' roll

Schlock
3841 4th Ave., #192
San Diego, CA 92103
B-movies newsletter

Superdope
520 Fredrick St., Box 33
San Francisco, CA 94117
current garage and "budget rock"

Ten Things
1407 NE 45th St., #17
Seattle, WA 98105
current punk/hardcore/garage

Ugly Things
405 W. Washington St., #237
San Diego, CA 92103
'60s beat/punk/R&B and some '70s punk

Ralph
Box 505 - 1288 Broughton St.
Vancouver, BC
V6G 2B5 Canada
ralpha6982@aol.com
coffee, jazz, and poetry

Chatterbox
5332 1/4 Virginia
Hollywood, CA 90029
current punk rock

Crohinga Well
Dendermondese, Steenweg 103
1730 Asse
Belgium
1960s & '70s psych and weird stuff

Feminist Baseball
P.O. Box 9609
Seattle, WA 98109
current garage, punk, etc.

Here 'Tis
P.O. Box 6092
Raleigh, NC 27628
1960s garage/punk

Rocktober
1507 E. 53rd St., #617E
Chicago, IL 60615
rock 'n' roll and comics

Black to Comm
714 Shady Ave.
Sharon, PA 16146
High energy rock 'n' roll

Hopefully in DTP #2:

The Diodes; Greetings from Cleveland; Rocket From The Tombs; Pagans, Mirrors, Electric Eels, etc. Refuzors; Vancouver '70s Punk; C'nnts; Screamers; Real Kids; Simply Saucer; Moe Tucker; and the proverbial much, much more!!

*Congratulations to Lee and Amie
and to Pamita and Jeff
on their upcoming nuptials.*

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